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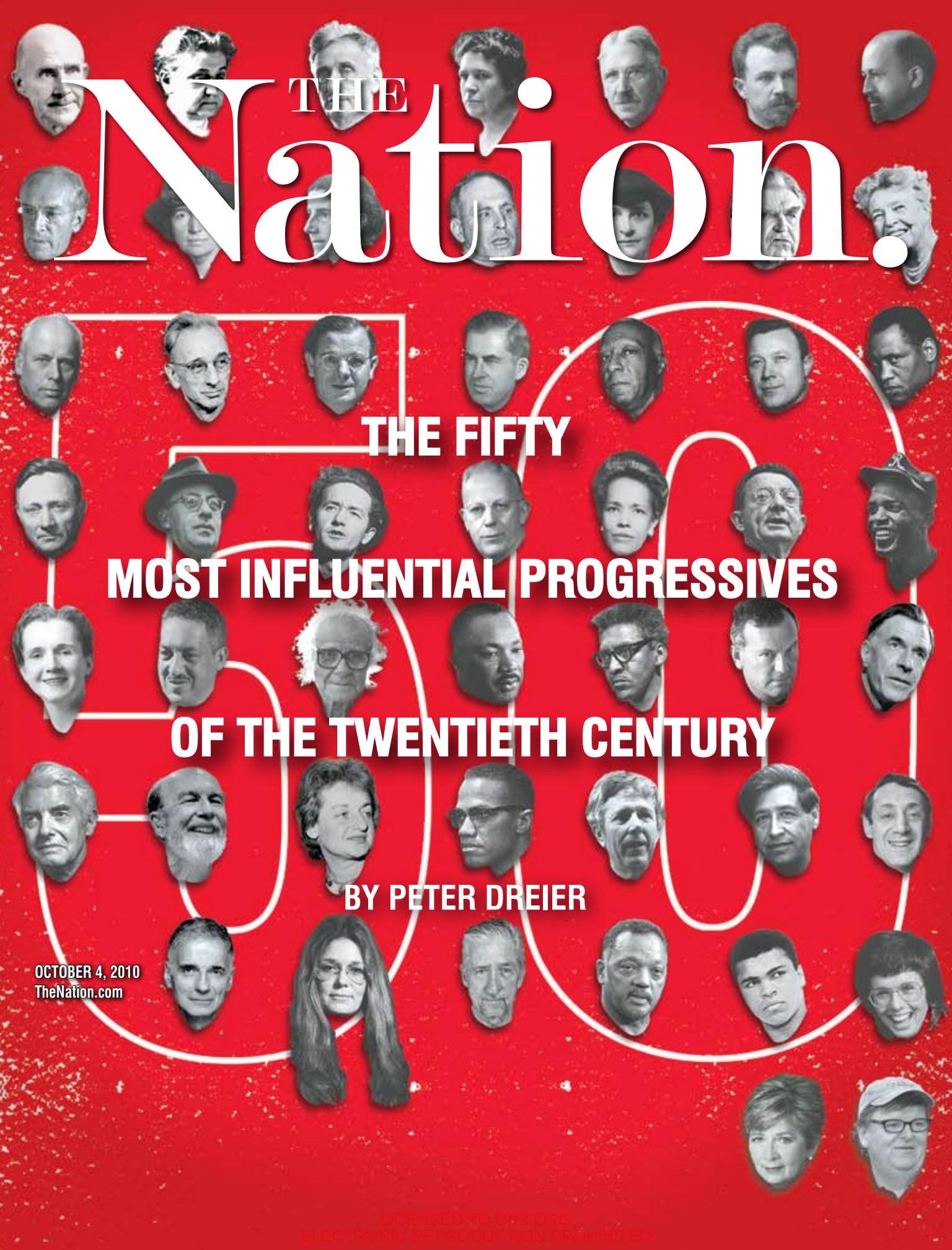

THE FIFTY MOST INFLUENTIAL PROGRESSIVES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

BY PETER DREIER

OCTOBER 4, 2010
TheNation.com

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Letters

Get Out, Exit, Scram, Beat It, Go Home…

Frankfort, Mich.
Your editorial "Getting Out of Afghanistan" [Aug. 16/23] was right on the money! I've served in Kabul, and after hoping that a more nuanced policy would emerge from the White House (it clearly hasn't), I agree that we should get out. Thanks for this seminal contribution to US foreign policy.
Ted Curran

Real Heroes: Those Who Speak Out

Exton, Pa.
As a 76-year-old Korean War veteran, I can well appreciate Sarah Lazare and Ryan Harvey's "WikiLeaks in Baghdad" [Aug. 16/23]. My heart goes out to Josh Stieber, Ray Corcoles and Ethan McCord, who are true heroes of the ill-advised and immoral war in Iraq. They describe not only the desensitization, dehumanization and even corruption of language soldiers face; they showed rare courage to speak out. The three young men showed their basic humanity and decency when they saw the brutalization of Iraqi civilians.
Norman K. Smith, *US Army (retired)*

Population Bomb

Falmouth, Mass.
Andrew Ross's "Greenwashing Nativism" [Aug. 16/23] has much to say about population issues and environmentalists. But Ross doesn't acknowledge the Sierra Club's Global Population and Environment Program (population@sierraclub.org), which explains the club's population strategies. Readers may be interested in the club's advocacy training program and its population program, which will soon visit Texas.
Robert Murphy

Rising From Its Ashes?

Redwood City, Calif.
Phoenix is *not* "ground zero for the national housing crisis," as claimed by Marc Cooper in "John McCain's Last Stand" [Aug. 16/23]; it is in third place behind Las Vegas and Merced. Nor is it the "bull's-eye of global warming in the Northern Hemisphere," as claimed by Andrew Ross in "Greenwashing Nativism." Phoenix is in trouble because of excessive development and real estate speculation.
Marianna Tubman

Oasis on the Upper West Side

Bellevue, Iowa
In her lovely, graceful remembrance of Iris McWilliams in "Noted" [Aug. 16/23], Katrina vanden Heuvel quotes a longtime friend of Iris and Cary McWilliams as saying of their apartment, "The intelligent and decent civil liberty types all drifted in, and as discouraging as the country seemed, the possibilities of an open and sane society seemed alive there." I wish *The Nation* to know that I feel about this magazine as did this friend about the McWilliams place. Thank you for keeping alive the hope for decency, inclusivity and community, all of which seem of so little value in this brave new barbarous world we have created.
Greg Cusack

Back to School—II

Hayward, Calif.
Thank you for shining a light on the importance of education reform and for highlighting leading voices for meaningful reform ["A New Vision for School Reform," June 14; "Letters," Sept. 20]. Linda Darling-Hammond remains a beacon of sanity and good sense. She provides an excellent overview of education reform efforts over the years. There is no silver bullet—the entire system needs an overhaul to address the many years of neglect.

When No Child Left Behind was instituted, the air was sucked out of classrooms across the country. The rote, uninspiring drill-and-kill method of teaching that the law

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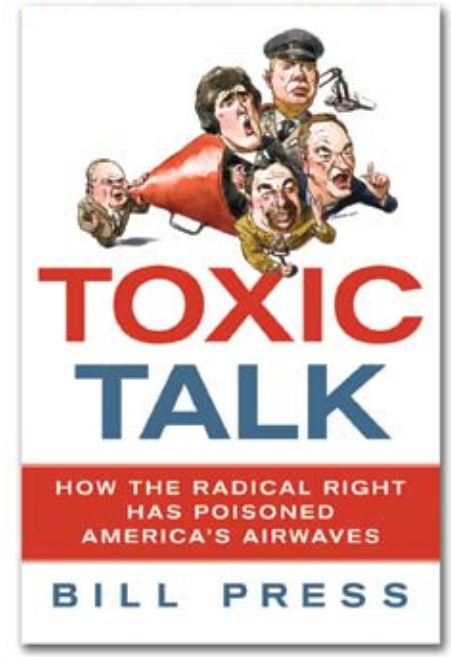

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The Teapot Tempest

The cheers that went up in Washington as Republican primary votes were totaled September 14 did not come from GOP headquarters. As former Bush administration spokeswoman Dana Perino acknowledged, Democrats had reason to be "gleeful." Candidates GOP strategists had recruited for Delaware's open Senate seat and New York's governorship were upset by Tea Party extremists with heavy baggage. Karl Rove says the Delaware results did severe—perhaps irreparable—damage to GOP prospects for taking the Senate this fall. But before progressives breathe sighs of relief, they had better recognize that, although Tea Party victories have made it harder for Republicans to win some key races, they do not guarantee overall positive results for Democrats on November 2.

EDITORIAL

It's probably true, as the Delaware Republican Party chair says, that Christine O'Donnell, the Palin-backed perennial candidate who upset moderate Mike Castle, is too scandal-plagued and ideologically "out there" to win. But Tea Party–tied Senate candidates who elbowed aside seemingly more electable Republicans in Florida, Kentucky, Colorado, Connecticut, Alaska, Wisconsin and other states have much better chances. Many of them have substantial war chests and are tacking to the center. At the same time, polls suggest that Democrats continue to experience an enthusiasm gap (see page 4).

What to do? There's an argument to be made for a smart nationalization of the Congressional races, with an eye toward forcing all GOP candidates to answer for extreme elements of the Tea Party agenda, which include eliminating or at least slashing Social Security and Medicare, handing the election of senators back to state legislatures, giving states far more say over civil rights and rewriting the Constitution so that children born to immigrants are not afforded citizenship. The ugly truth is that some of these stances are popular in some places, but taken as a whole, the Tea Party program is an extremist one. Highlighting it and demanding responses from Republicans could create tensions in their ranks that benefit Democrats. Forcing a GOP Senate prospect like Connecticut's Linda McMahon or a gubernatorial candidate like New York's Carl Paladino to respond to the Tea Party creates a "damned if they do, damned if they don't" dynamic in which an embrace of extreme stances scares off moderate Republicans and independents, while a distancing from those stances offends the faithful.

But scare tactics aren't going to be enough nationally or in many of the most competitive races. Progressives who are frightened by the prospect of a Tea Party–defined GOP holding the balance of power may forget their frustrations with the Obama administration and rush to the polls. However, the broader base of casual Democrats and independents, whose votes elected Obama and produced overwhelming Democratic majorities in Congress, are deeply worried about high unemployment and retirement. A populist message that emphasizes job creation and protection of Social Security, along with tax cuts for the working and middle class instead of the wealthiest, would do a lot to answer those concerns, as would a tough stance against the depredations of Wall Street (President Obama could give a powerful signal on that front by appointing Elizabeth Warren as head of the new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau). Such a campaign, combined with an explanation of the economic threats posed by a hard turn to the right, could yet provide Democrats with the numbers they need to keep a lid on the teapot.

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Think, Prey, Vote

The "enthusiasm gap," the political term of art developed to describe the differing excitement levels of recharged Republicans and disappointed Democrats, is not an entirely false construct. But it is also a strategy. Right-wing pundits and their amen corner in the media have for months been peddling the fantasy that this fall's election results are a foregone conclusion: after steering off course with Barack Obama and the Democrats, they say, America is certain to veer right. But the big wins by Tea Party candidates in Republican primaries have created openings that Democrats can exploit. And the notion that economic uncertainty and high unemployment will necessarily steer swing voters to the Republicans contrasts with a lot of political history—not to mention logic. After all, people who fear the loss of their jobs do not casually vote for politicians who oppose extending unemployment benefits and talk of doing away with Social Security as we know it. Republican strategists know their best way to win is by convincing potentially Democratic voters that there is no point to casting a ballot. That's why conservatives are trying so hard to talk us into a 1994 moment, in which Republican turnout surged while union members and progressives, frustrated by a Democratic administration's compromises, stayed home. The challenge for progressive independents and Democrats (and Republicans of conscience) is to break the spin cycle. To do this, they must recognize the contours of an election season that has twisted and turned radically since it began. To wit:

COMMENT

1. *The Scariest Republicans Are Not Necessarily Tea-Stained.* Democrats have benefited from the Tea Party pressure on GOP primaries, which has tipped nomination fights toward extreme Senate candidates like Sharron Angle in Nevada and Joe Miller in Alaska. But too much attention is being paid to obvious wing nuts. Too little is being paid to crisp and professional, supposedly "mainstream" candidates like Ohio Senate nominee Rob Portman—among Senate candidates, the number-one GOP recipient of Wall Street money this year. An architect of trade policies—as a key Congressional backer of NAFTA and normalizing trade with China and then as George W. Bush's US trade representative—that have devastated the Midwest, Portman should not be able to show his face amid the shuttered factories of Toledo and Youngstown. Instead, he and other economic extremists, like Washington's Dino Rossi and Illinois's Mark Kirk, are generally depicted as relatively benign. That's wrong. An election in which Angle loses but Portman wins would be just as devastating for working Americans. The Tea Party is unsettling, but economic royalists who present themselves as reasoned statesmen pose the more serious long-term threat to working families. And Democrats need to talk about this threat as much as they do about Sarah Palin and her minions.

2. *This Does Not Have to Be the Nationalized Election That Republicans Propose.* GOP strategists want a referendum on Obama; but that comes in 2012. The more the president uses his bully pulpit to talk job creation—as he did with a solid Labor Day

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speech on infrastructure investment and a blunt rejection of tax breaks for the wealthy—the more he helps Democrats. But the instinct of grassroots Dems to defend Obama's accomplishments is a bad one when Americans think the country's headed in the wrong direction. In Great Lakes and Midwestern states, where the party faces its most serious potential losses, Democratic Congressional candidates should ditch national party playbooks and talk about changing trade policies to renew manufacturing and protect family farmers.

They should say, as do smart Representatives like Ohio's Marcy Kaptur and Illinois's Phil Hare, that they will oppose a Democratic president who is wrong on factory and farm issues. The key is not to go to Obama's right, where the space is filled, but to embrace a robust economic populism, which is the best counter to the Tea Party's corporate-sponsored fantasy that government is the problem. This requires different messages in different regions. But wherever they are, Democrats have to understand that when voters are scared and hurting economically, it is absurd to defend the status quo.

3. *Social Security Is the Sleeper Issue of 2010.* GOP leaders tend to avoid supporting GOP Representative Paul Ryan's "Roadmap for America's Future," with its schemes to privatize Social Security and Medicare, but some Republican candidates have embraced it. High-profile contenders, including Alaska's Miller and Kentucky's Rand Paul, want to shred safety nets. And the generalized GOP attack on spending steers toward the cut-entitlements cliff. This is not the time for progressives to talk of "reforming" these programs but rather for a no-holds-barred defense of them—and for smart talk about expanding them.

4. *State Races Matter.* Most governors will be chosen this fall, as will the legislators who redraw Congressional districts. If Republicans retake the House and dominate the statehouses, GOP governors and senators will be able to use the redistricting process to lock in their party's gains for a decade—especially in Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Florida, California and Texas, where substantial redistricting will be required. In these states, winning gubernatorial and state legislative races means just as much as winning national contests. The Tea Partisans know this, so their campaigning blurs the lines between federal and state races, with a sweeping antigovernment message. It's hard for unions, environmental groups and their allies to counter that message, since they're defending different programs in different states. But nuanced and effective defenses have to be mounted, not just to preserve essential education and social ser-

Noted.

REMEMBERING GENE: About ten years ago, *The Nation*'s business staff was approached by a handsome, energetic man with brilliant white hair. His name was **Gene Case**, and he had a proposition for us: hire his newly formed advocacy-advertising agency, **Avenging Angels**, and he would double our circulation.

We had little faith in the prosaic power of mass advertising to introduce large numbers of new readers to America's oldest weekly. But Gene's power was anything but prosaic: as a young man, he was a "hot commodity in political advertising," according to the *New York Times*, working on campaigns for **Lyndon Johnson** and **Nelson Rockefeller**. When he left politics to focus on commercial advertising, Gene coined the unforgettable "tum-te-tum-Tums" campaign and the "Thanks, I needed that!" Mennen Skin Bracer commercials. He helped build **Jordan, McGrath, Case & Partners** into a $500 million business at its peak.

In 2001 Gene founded Avenging Angels, devoting his formidable skills to the progressive causes that were most dear to his heart. His passion for our values, his boundless energy and creativity, and his desire to see *The Nation* in the hands of more and more committed readers (not to mention his extreme generosity in working at a progressive pay scale) made us so much bigger and bolder. He created enormously successful TV spots for us at a time when no other magazine could make TV ads work; he conceived brilliant radio commercials that introduced *The Nation* to tens of thousands of enthusiastic progressives; his creativity enhanced our website and our print pages; and his agency continues to create our weekly magazine covers.

When Gene died unexpectedly on September 9, the progressive community lost a matchless champion. We will be forever grateful for his work, his feistiness, his humanity and his unflagging desire to make this country a better place. And even though Gene would never take all the credit for it, our circulation did double! Thanks, Gene. We'll miss you. TERESA STACK

SARAH COMES HOME: Some amazing news: **Sarah Shourd**, one of the Americans detained in Iran for more than thirteen months, was finally released on September 14 to the Swiss Embassy in Tehran. Her release was set in motion by the direct intervention of President Ahmadinejad. Iran's Press TV reported that Shourd was released on $500,000 bail, though it is unclear who paid it, as the families were unable to raise the funds and the United States had refused to pay. According to her mother, Nora, Shourd had been struggling with depression and had been denied treatment for health problems, including precancerous cervical cells and a breast lump.

Meanwhile, an Iranian prosecutor announced that Shourd's companions, **Josh Fattal** and Nation Institute Investigative Fund reporter **Shane Bauer**, would be detained for at least two more months. The *Los Angeles Times* reports that all three were formally charged this week with espionage and illegally entering Iran. But a joint investigation by The Investigative Fund and *The Nation* located eyewitnesses who said all three were arrested inside Iraqi territory and then detained by a rogue officer of the Revolutionary Guards. Authorities from Secretary of State **Hillary Clinton** to the **Committee to Protect Journalists**, as well as all the editors who have worked with Bauer, have rejected the spying charges as ludicrous.

Masoud Shafie, the Iranian attorney representing the three, says he is pressing for Fattal and Bauer to be released on bail as well. Here's hoping. ESTHER KAPLAN

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vices that rely on state budgets but to avoid one-party dominance of redistricting.

5. *It's Not Just Candidates.* Conservative strategists have poured resources into petition drives to qualify ballot measures that press the hot buttons of the faithful. Thus, initiatives in Colorado, Arizona and Oklahoma are challenging federal health reforms with proposals to prohibit insurance-coverage mandates. Other states will address antiunion proposals and hunting rights, and of course there is Oklahoma's measure "forbidding courts from considering international law." But the big fights are over taxes. Massachusetts, Colorado and Washington will vote on tax-slashing schemes, while Indiana, Missouri and Virginia will consider constraining taxing authority. Democrats have done a poor job of making the case for government; but public employee and teacher unions—which last year turned back anti-tax proposals in Maine and Washington—can generate turnout that defends services while aiding progressive candidates. This helps their members while at the same time makes an essential contribution to the debate.

6. *Don't Use an Old Map.* Some Democratic incumbents, like Arkansas Senator Blanche Lincoln, may be doomed. Some Democratic challengers, like North Carolina Senate candidate Elaine Marshall, are very much in the running. In Alaska, a Senate race that was more or less conceded to the Republicans before a Palin-backed candidate beat the incumbent in a GOP primary, could now be competitive. Progressives must evolve as the year does. They must also recognize that there are races where the best prospects are not Democrats. In Rhode Island some Democrats are already backing independent Lincoln Chafee for governor. And while Democrat Kendrick Meek may be the most progressive contender in Florida's Senate race, Governor Charlie Crist, a former Republican running as a moderate independent, polls stronger against Tea Party Republican Marco Rubio. The 2010 election cycle has already posed plenty of challenges. This is not the year to go on autopilot. By remaining rigorously conscious of the changing landscape and the opportunities it will present, progressive voters might yet assure that they, rather than conservative pundits, write the 2010 narrative. JOHN NICHOLS

Calvin Trillin, Deadline Poet

A Summary of What The *New York Times* Discovered About John Boehner's Ties to Corporate Lobbyists

It couldn't be plainer.
It's just a no-brainer.
The fat cats own Boehner.
He's on a retainer.

Labour's Fraternal Struggle

London

It was billed as the fight that would determine the future of the British left, a struggle for the soul of the Labour Party. Hammered in the polls in May, Labour announced a four-month campaign to decide on Gordon Brown's successor. The idea was to allow time not just for a change of leader but for a wide-ranging debate on the party's core beliefs, direction and long-term goals. With dozens of hustings around the country, candidates would have a chance to express their vision for Labour and for Britain beyond the economic crisis, reverse the decline of a party that hemorrhaged nearly two-thirds of its membership in government and rebuild the dream of a progressive majority.

COMMENT

Instead, the campaign has been an illustration of the narcissism of small differences, as four white men in their 40s—all Oxbridge-educated career politicians, all former government ministers—have struggled to distinguish themselves from one another, with one black woman (also a career politician and a Cambridge graduate) playing the rebel's role. After thirteen years in office, it is almost impossible to talk about the party's future without rehashing the past—yet it is vital to avoid suicidal recriminations. New Labour's ghost is always present at the feast; all the candidates agree that it must be exorcised. But the deeper argument about what that might mean—a return to socialist roots, a continued embrace of poll-led policies and market-led reforms, or some as yet unarticulated solution—has been all but sublimated into a contest between two men whose views might look quite similar even if they didn't happen to be brothers.

The ballots that went out to Labour Party members in September list five names: Diane Abbott (the first black woman elected to Parliament, and an outspoken opponent of Blairism and the Iraq War but with little support from Labour branches outside London), Ed Balls (former chief adviser to the treasury, education minister and Gordon Brown's closest lieutenant), Andy Burnham (former minister for culture, media and sport and the only candidate with roots in the white working class) and the Miliband brothers. The sons of Marxist economist Ralph Miliband both came of age inside New Labour—David (the elder) as head of Tony Blair's policy unit, Ed as a key adviser to Gordon Brown—and for much of their careers they have lived and worked literally next door to each other. Both were elected to Parliament from safe Labour seats and quickly promoted to cabinet. David was Blair's environment secretary; Ed headed Brown's new department of energy and climate change. David, nicknamed "Brains" for his intellectual prowess and geeky demeanor, rose to become Brown's foreign secretary and chief potential rival; Ed, a more affable figure, stayed in his brother's shadow even as Blair's opponents began to adopt him as their champion, sporting buttons that read My Favourite Miliband

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About Your Professor

Dr. Charles Kimball is Presidential Professor and Director of the Religious Studies Program at the University of Oklahoma. He received his Th.D. from Harvard University in Comparative Religion with a specialization in Islamic Studies. Dr. Kimball is an expert analyst on issues related to Islam, Jewish-Christian-Muslim relations, and the intersection of religion and politics in the United States. He is the author of the highly acclaimed book *When Religion Becomes Evil*.

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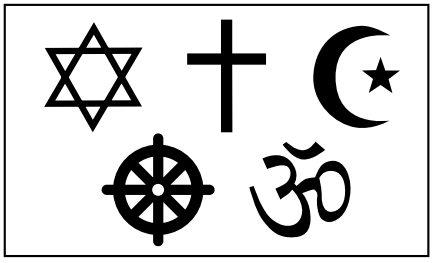

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Is Ed. Until, that is, he joined the leadership race.

This was never going to be an equal contest. Burnham and Abbott struggled to gain enough nominations from fellow MPs to qualify, with Abbott succeeding only when David Miliband urged his supporters to back her candidacy. (The party leader is chosen by a three-part electorate, with an equal say going to MPs, Labour members and members of "affiliated organizations," mostly trade unions.) And though Balls has been most effective in opposing the Conservative–Liberal Democrat coalition government, particularly on the folly of imposing cuts in a recession, his candidacy, like Burnham's, was rendered toxic to many activists by his eagerness to raise the issue of immigration after May's election disaster. But any candidate would have had a tough time gaining a hearing from a press corps in thrall to the prospect of fraternal strife. We've seen story after story in which David, the cerebral "heir to Blair," says that "brotherly love is more important than politics," while Ed, once seen as the shy, less polished Brownite, replies that "David is my best friend in all the world." The latest polls show Ed, who started out a distant third behind front-runner David and Balls, now snapping at his brother's heels.

The winner will be announced September 25 at the start of the Labour Party conference, and perhaps then we can begin to debate the choices facing not just the party but the country. As the Lib-Con coalition consolidates its grip on power, Prime Minister David Cameron's "progressive conservatism" and his deputy Nick Clegg's promise of a "progressive alliance" have given way to the reality of Chancellor George Osborne's austerity budget, with cuts up to 40 percent—deeper even than Thatcher's—shredding the safety net. With police leaders warning of unrest to come, some £15 billion is to be taken from benefits to the unemployed, whom Osborne has accused of treating welfare as a "lifestyle choice."

Of course, all five Labour candidates are against the cuts, putting forth their ideas on how to raise revenues without unfairly burdening those least able to pay, from David Miliband's proposal of a "mansion tax" on houses worth more than £2 million to Ed's suggested "graduate tax," proportionate to earnings, to replace college tuition fees. But for all the talk of "Labour values" and "community," no candidate has offered a convincing narrative to challenge the dominant view of Britain as a society living beyond its means, with the markets setting the terms for what is possible. Opposition to the cuts has fallen largely to the trade unions, whose motives are all too easily attacked by Britain's right-wing press. Yet the unions, too, seem mired in the past; a strategy based on slogans from the 1980s with the name "Osborne" substituted for "Thatcher" is no more likely to work now than it was then. Those leftists confidently prophesying that the coalition won't last should remember how unlikely a leader Lady Thatcher seemed at first—and that Labour spent the next eighteen years in opposition.

There are certainly differences between the Milibands. David is more defensive of the New Labour record, more anxious about ditching a once-winning formula; Ed seems more committed to change, to reversing inequality, to connecting with the grassroots. We've liked Ed, a former *Nation* intern, ever since we met him twenty years ago at the late *Nation* writer Andrew Kopkind's kitchen table. Ed's recent remark that "we've got to stop treating the trade unions like embarrassing relatives who've got to be locked in the attic" is a good partial sketch of where New Labour went wrong; and his call, as a government minister, for a climate-change movement to make leaders act showed not just understanding of but enthusiasm for a politics that doesn't stop at Parliament's door. But David's embrace of the Alinsky-style London Citizens campaign, and his commitment to train 1,000 community organizers during the leadership race, show that big brother is no mere apparatchik. Style matters in politics, which is why Ed's supporters wave placards proclaiming Ed Speaks Human. But experience matters too, and though David is tainted by his Blairite past, his support for the Iraq War and his role as foreign secretary in covering up Britain's involvement in torture, he also has the stature, and the credibility, that make him a more feared opponent for the coalition. Whichever brother wins will need all the skills of the other to reconnect with and reclaim Britain's left-of-center majority, shut out by the ruling coalition. Labour is absorbed in choosing a new head; the more vital task will be to repair its broken body.

D.D. Guttenplan and Maria Margaronis

D.D. Guttenplan and Maria Margaronis write from The Nation*'s London bureau.*

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Can't get enough of Peter Dreier's list of the most influential progressives of the twentieth century? Visit **thenation.com/50progressives** for slide shows, archive articles, suggested biographies and a community forum on progressives we missed—plus more!

This week on **The Nation on GRITtv**: Naomi Klein talks about building a real left, and Melissa Harris-Lacewell takes the media to task for failing to cover progressive movements.

A GAO report suggests that Iraq is not broke. Instead, its rulers have been sitting on a vast pile of cash while begging for money from the United States and the international community, writes Aram Roston in **GAO: Iraq's Government, Requesting Billions, Has Billions in Surplus**.

Rape is not an inevitable consequence of war, writes Barbara Crossette in **A New UN Voice Calls for Criminalizing Conflict Rape**. United Nations special representative Margot Wallström says there's far more that UN peacekeeping troops could do to prevent it.

In **World Cup Hangover Hits South Africa**, Dave Zirin and Daniel Bloom write that the party's over: massive strikes and rapid erosion of the World Cup spirit speak to the serious political crisis facing scandal-plagued South African President Jacob Zuma.

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Alexander Cockburn

The Soros Syndrome

George Soros is giving $100 million to Human Rights Watch—with a challenge for the organization to find a matching $100 million from other donors. He's been rewarded with ringing cheers for his disinterested munificence.

Soros told NPR that with the expansion of HRW prompted by his big new grant, "the people doing the investigations won't necessarily be Americans.... The United States has lost the moral high ground.... And that has sort of endangered the credibility, the legitimacy of Americans being in the forefront of advocating human rights."

Soros the financier made his billions as a currency speculator; he could destroy a country's reserves, hastening its social disintegration. Then Soros the philanthropist could finance HRW's investigations into the abuses his operations might have helped to induce. He offers an arresting profile of liberal interventionism in our era, in which economic and political destabilization (mostly calibrated in concert with the US government) has easy recourse to the moral and political bludgeon of a human rights report, which is then used to ratchet up pressure for an imperial onslaught—whether by economic sanctions, covert sabotage, aerial bombing or a blend of all three. The role of human rights NGOs in legitimating NATO's attack on the former Yugoslavia is a prime example.

Or take a look at Soros's meddling in Georgia. His millions and the NGOs under his control played an active role in installing the unstable and decidedly authoritarian Mikheil Saakashvili. The Foundation for the Defense of Democracies quoted a former Georgian parliamentarian as saying that in the three months before the 2003 Rose Revolution, "Soros spent $42 million ramping up for the overthrow of Shevardnadze." Former Georgian Foreign Minister Salomé Zourabichvili was also quoted in the French journal *Hérodote* explaining, "The NGOs which gravitate around the Soros Foundation undeniably carried the revolution. However, one cannot end one's analysis with the revolution and one clearly sees that, afterwards, the Soros Foundation and the NGOs were integrated into power." Consult Human Rights Watch's rather muffled report on Georgia three years later, and you'll find the statement that "U.S. backing of President Saakashvili's government has led to a less critical attitude toward human rights abuses in the country."

With Soros's extra money, HRW will be dangling big funds at its non-American recruits. Regarding the hefty salaries that will surely follow, it's worth raising the experience of Eritrea, which immediately got into trouble with the NGO system after independence in 1991. Eritrea-based journalist Tom Mountain tells me, "For one, Eritrea won't allow the NGOs to pay above civil service salaries. Why? NGOs come into a country and find the best and brightest and give them salaries ten or twenty times the local rate, buying their allegiance and often turning them against their country. Two, Eritrea has implemented a 10 percent overhead policy, and all the NGOs that couldn't or wouldn't comply with the documentation were kicked out, about the same time Eritrea kicked out the UN 'peacekeepers' here."

In other words, foundations, nonprofits, NGOs—call them what you will—can on occasion perform nobly, but overall their increasing power moves in step with the temper of our times: privatization of political action, overseen and manipulated by the rich and their executives. The tradition of voluntarism is extinguished by the professional, very well-paid do-good bureaucracy.

NGOs endowed by the rich are instinctively hostile to radical social change, at least in any terms a left-winger of the 1950s or '60s would understand. The US environmental movement is now strategically supervised by the Pew Charitable Trusts, a top dispenser—which has neutralized the movement as a radical force. As for the role of Western NGOs in the third world, I recommend a glance at the great Indian journalist P. Sainath's classic book *Everybody Loves a Good Drought*: "The majority of NGOs are, alas, deeply integrated with the establishment, with government and with the agenda of their funding bodies.... They also provide white collar employment. Nepal, next door, has over 10,000 NGOs—one for every 2,000 inhabitants."

The amazing career of "microcredit" as a strategy for "development" is also very instructive. Western NGOs and their rich donors ecstatically seized on the term, now vying with "sustainability" as their most cherished noun. For one thing, microloans have something bracingly austere about them: they are by definition small, and therefore eschew large ambitions, like organizing to force the government into serious action or, if necessary, overthrowing the government and enforcing macro-actions like land reform and economic redistribution.

The NGOs, many of them intertwined with corporate sponsors, have pretty much destroyed what began as a legitimate tool for poor village women to make their lives marginally better. Now giant multinational banks and corporate finance outfits have moved steadily toward capturing the microcredit sector. In 2006, Sainath reports, "the government of Andhra Pradesh passed a law, enthusiastically supported in the legislature, to curb the interest-gouging activities of some NGO/non-profits and other groups.... They were charging interest rates that effectively turned out to be between 24 and 36 per cent and even higher."

At the dawn of the twentieth century, Lenin and Martov were organizing their international Congresses and looking for grant money to this end. Martov, the Menshevik, told Lenin he must stop paying for the hotels and halls with money hijacked by Stalin from Georgian banks in Tblisi. Lenin reassured Martov, and then asked Stalin to knock over another bank, which he did—Europe's record bank heist up till that time. It was one way, perhaps the only way, past the grip of cautious millionaires. Then as now. ■

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Katha Pollitt

Franzenfreude, Continued

Do male writers have an edge in attracting serious critical attention? This question, so urgent to women writers, so tedious to male editors and pundits, is getting its latest workout thanks to the vigorous tweeting of bestselling popular novelists Jennifer Weiner and Jodi Picoult about the accolades heaped upon Jonathan Franzen's new novel, *Freedom* (two ecstatic *New York Times* reviews, the cover of *Time* and much, much more) and Gary Shteyngart's *Super Sad True Love Story*. Weiner is a sharp and fearless observer of literary gender politics, and I think she is onto something. (I should mention that she used my collection of personal essays, *Learning to Drive*, to illustrate the double standard by which women autobiographers are slammed for revealing small weaknesses while men are praised as honest and bold for chronicling their addictions and wife-beating. And as long as we are on the subject, let me add that my shocked, shocked reviewers were women.) Plenty of women writers get excellent reviews, but it is very rare for them to get the kind of excited, rapturous high-cultural reception given to writers who are "white and male and living in Brooklyn" or, since Franzen lives on the Upper East Side, are named Jonathan. "Girl genius" is not a phrase in our language.

Indeed, men get more reviews, period. The editors of DoubleX, *Slate*'s women's blog, found that over the past two years 62 percent of the fiction reviewed in the *New York Times* had male authors, as did 72 percent of the books that got both a daily and a Sunday review. (Actually it's worse than those numbers imply: women's books are more likely to land in the *NYTBR* "Fiction Chronicle" columns, where books are reviewed in brief—so women not only got fewer reviews, they were more likely than men to get shorter, less significant reviews.) And the *Times* is not alone: *The Atlantic*, *The New Republic* and *Slate* itself review more fiction by men (if you include the reviews in the DoubleX blog, it's 55 percent). A year's worth of fiction coverage in *The Nation* clocked in at 75 percent male (!). Of course, it is possible that men write two-thirds of fiction or (more likely, but still improbable) two-thirds of the kinds of fiction high-end book editors assign—but those assigning decisions are themselves the product of a whole hierarchy of taste that has gender already built into it. What is a significant subject? Which writers get to ask the reader to work hard? Chris Jackson, an editor at Spiegel & Grau, for Chrissake, confessed on the *Atlantic* website that he hadn't read any fiction by women in years, so he read some, and, hey, it was pretty good! There are lots of important women editors, as some have noted in trying to dismiss charges of sexism in the book world, but I doubt there's a single one who reads only fiction by women. But don't take my womanly word for it. When Terry Gross on NPR's *Fresh Air* suggested to Franzen that some other writers resented his success, he replied, "It seems like there's a different critique. It's a feminist critique. And it's about the quality of attention that writing by women gets, compared to the quality of attention [to] male writers. I actually have a lot of those feelings myself." Well, all right!

It's often said that women's writing is less valued because it takes up stereotypically feminine (i.e., narrower) subjects—family, children, love and becoming a woman (ho-hum, boring!)—while men's books deal with rousing, Important Universal topics like war, politics and whaling, and becoming a man. There may be some truth in this picture, but most serious novels are not so easily pigeonholed. It's more accurate to say that the way we read a novel is colored by our awareness of the author's sex—hence, students who describe a story differently according to whether they think Flannery O'Connor was male or female (and that famous study of teachers who gave the same paper a higher grade when it was ascribed to a boy). We have different expectations of male and female writers; we put them in different categories and different frames—and Great American Novelist is a frame that is coded male. When men write books about family life—John Updike, Jonathan Franzen—they are read as writing about America and the Human Condition. When women write books that are ambitious, political and engaged with the big world of ideas, they are seen as stories about the emotional lives of their characters. I'm thinking, for example, of Sigrid Nunez's fifth novel, *The Last of Her Kind*, a dark, brilliant tale centered on two college classmates in the 1960s, one of whom becomes a kind of hybrid of Kathy Boudin and Simone Weil. Or Jennifer Egan's second novel, *Look at Me*, set in a near future when public cameras record virtually everything, and featuring the parallel stories of a terrorist sleeper and a fashion model whose face is radically altered after an accident. Or Dana Spiotta's second, *Eat the Document*, about former Weathermen on the run decades later. Any of these inventive, original, bold and brilliantly written books could have gotten if not the Franzen treatment, the Gary Shteyngart or the Jonathan Lethem treatment (and don't get me wrong, I loved *Motherless Brooklyn*). But they didn't. The reviews were good-to-wonderful—Spiotta even got a smart rave from Michiko Kakutani and a profile in the daily *Times*, plus a slightly clueless review in the *NYTBR*, but not the kind of fanfare that puts a writer in the center of the literary map, even the literary map of Brooklyn.

Granted, the book world is huge, and tastes differ and Jonathan Franzen is a terrific writer whether or not he would have gotten star treatment as Joanna. There are counterexamples like Jhumpa Lahiri, whose sly, delicate fiction gets man-sized attention. But it would be strange if literary taste-making was the one place in American life where gender expectations and assumptions played no role, wouldn't it? ■

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THE FIFTY MOST INFLUENTIAL PROGRESSIVES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

BY PETER DREIER

A hundred years ago, any soapbox orator who called for women's suffrage, laws protecting the environment, an end to lynching, workers' right to form unions, a progressive income tax, a federal minimum wage, old-age insurance, the eight-hour workday and government-subsidized healthcare would be considered an impractical utopian dreamer or a dangerous socialist. Now we take these ideas for granted. The radical ideas of one generation are often the common sense of the next. When that happens, give credit to the activists and movements that fought to take those ideas from the margins to the mainstream. We all stand on the shoulders of earlier generations of radicals and reformers who challenged the status quo of their day.

Unfortunately, most Americans know little of this progressive history. It isn't taught in most high schools. You can't find it on the major television networks or even on the History Channel. Indeed, our history is under siege. In popular media, the most persistent interpreter of America's radical past is Glenn Beck, who teaches viewers a wildly inaccurate history of unions, civil rights and the American left. Beck argues, for example, that the civil rights movement "has been perverted and distorted" by people claiming that Martin Luther King Jr. supported "redistribution of wealth." In fact, King did call for a "radical redistribution of economic power." Using his famous chalkboard, Beck draws connections between various people and organizations, and defines them as radicals, Marxists, socialists, revolutionaries, leftists, progressives or social justice activists—all of which leads inexorably to Barack Obama. Drawing on writings by conspiracy theorists and white supremacists, Beck presents a misleading version of America's radical family tree.

Many historians, including Howard Zinn in his classic *A People's History of the United States* and Eric Foner in *The Story of American Freedom*, have chronicled the story of America's utopians, radicals and reformers. Every generation needs to retell this story, reinterpret it and use it to help shape the present and future. Unless Americans know this history, they'll have little understanding of how far we've come, how we got here and how progress was made by a combination of grassroots movements and reformers.

Progressive change happens from the bottom up, as Zinn argued. But movements need leaders as well as rank-and-file activists. Movement leaders make strategic choices that help win victories. These choices involve mobilizing people, picking and framing issues, training new leaders, identifying opportunities, conducting research, recruiting allies, using the media, negotiating with opponents and deciding when to engage in protest and civil disobedience, lobbying, voting and other strategies.

This list includes fifty people—listed chronologically in terms of their early important accomplishments—who helped change America in a more progressive direction during the twentieth century by organizing movements, pushing for radical reforms and popularizing progressive ideas. They are not equally famous, but they are all leaders who spurred others to action. Most were not single-issue activists but were involved in broad crusades for economic and social justice, revealing the many connections among different movements across generations. Most were organizers and activists, but the list includes academics, lawyers and Supreme Court justices, artists and musicians who also played important roles in key movements.

The list includes people who spent most of their lives as activists for change—long-distance runners, not sprinters. Many of them were born in the nineteenth century but gained prominence in the twentieth. Some important activists who lived into the twentieth century but whose major achievements occurred in the previous century—such as labor organizer Mary Harris "Mother" Jones; environmentalist John Muir; African-American journalist, feminist and anti-lynching crusader Ida B. Wells; agrarian Populist leader Mary Lease; and Knights of Labor leader Terence Powderly—are not included.

Although many politicians were important allies of progressive movements—including Senator (and Governor) Robert La Follette; Senators Robert Wagner, Paul Douglas and Paul

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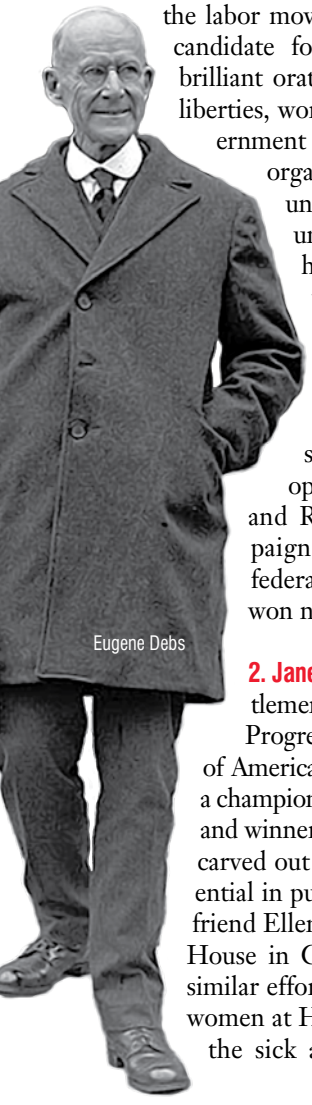
Wellstone; Congress members Victor Berger, Jeannette Rankin, Vito Marcantonio, Bella Abzug and Phil Burton; Mayors Tom Johnson, Fiorello LaGuardia and Harold Washington; as well as Presidents Franklin Roosevelt and (for his domestic social programs) Lyndon Johnson—the list excludes elected officials. (Eugene Debs, Harvey Milk and Tom Hayden, who were elected to public office, are included because they made their reputations primarily as activists.)

A few of the people on the list expressed views, at some point in their lives, that progressives consider objectionable, such as Margaret Sanger's endorsement of eugenics, Earl Warren's support for rounding up Japanese-Americans during World War II, Bayard Rustin's support for the Vietnam War and Jackie Robinson's attack on Paul Robeson. They made mistakes, which may be understandable in historical context, but which should be acknowledged as part of their lives and times.

There is, of course, much room for dispute about who belongs on the list—who is missing and who might be replaced. This listing is simply a starting point for further debate and discussion, which we invite you to join on *The Nation*'s website [see box on page 21].


Eugene Debs

1. Eugene Debs (1855–1926). Through his leadership of the labor movement, his five campaigns as a Socialist candidate for president and his spellbinding and brilliant oratory, Debs popularized ideas about civil liberties, workers' rights, peace and justice, and government regulation of big business. In 1893 he organized one of the nation's first industrial unions, the American Railway Union, to unite all workers within one industry, and he led the Pullman Strike of 1894. He was elected city clerk of Terre Haute, Indiana, and served in the Indiana State Assembly in 1884. In 1900, 1904, 1908, 1912 and 1920, Debs ran for president on the Socialist Party ticket. His speeches and writing influenced popular opinion and the platforms of Democratic and Republican candidates. His 1920 campaign took place while he was in Atlanta's federal prison for opposing World War I; he won nearly 1 million votes.

2. Jane Addams (1860–1935) pioneered the settlement house movement and was an important Progressive Era urban reformer, the "mother" of American social work, a founder of the NAACP, a champion of women's suffrage, an antiwar crusader and winner of the 1931 Nobel Peace Prize. Addams carved out a new way for women to become influential in public affairs. In 1889 she and her college friend Ellen Gates Starr (1859–1940) founded Hull House in Chicago's immigrant slums, inspired by similar efforts she had seen in England. Initially the women at Hull House took care of children, nursed the sick and offered kindergarten and evening classes for immigrant adults. They then added an art gallery, public kitchen, gym, swimming pool, coffeehouse, cooperative boarding club for girls, book bindery, art studio, music school, drama group, circulating library and employment bureau. Hull House soon became a hub of social activism around labor and immigrants' rights, crusades against political corruption, slum housing, unsafe workplaces and child labor. It was the inspiration for other settlement houses in cities across the country.

3. Louis Brandeis (1856–1941) was a crusading lawyer and Supreme Court justice. Appointed by Woodrow Wilson in 1916, he served until 1939. His writings and activism changed American attitudes and law about the need to restrain corporate power, outlined in his book *Other People's Money and How the Bankers Use It* (1914). As a "people's lawyer" in Boston, he fought railroad monopolies, defended labor laws and helped create policies to address poverty—an approach that is now called public interest law. He pioneered the use of expert testimony (called the Brandeis Brief) in court cases, paving the way for an approach to the law that relied on empirical evidence. In 1908 he represented the state of Oregon in *Muller v. Oregon* before the Supreme Court. The issue was whether a state could limit the hours that female workers could work, which employers argued was an infringement on the "freedom of contract" between employers and their employees. His legal argument was relatively short, but he included more than 100 pages of documentation, including reports from social workers, doctors, factory inspectors and other experts, which showed that working long hours destroyed women's health and well-being. Brandeis won the case and changed the field of litigation.

4. Florence Kelley (1859–1932) was a leading organizer against sweatshops and an advocate for children's rights, the minimum wage and the eight-hour workday. Part of the first generation of women to attend college, she joined the Intercollegiate Socialist Society, was active in women's suffrage and was a founder of the NAACP. She worked at Hull House from 1891 to 1899 and the Henry Street Settlement in New York City from 1899 to 1926. In 1893 Governor John Altgeld appointed her Illinois's first chief factory inspector, a position she used to expose abusive working conditions, especially for children. She successfully lobbied for the creation of the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics so that reformers would have adequate information about the condition of workers. In 1908 she gathered sociological and medical evidence for *Muller v. Oregon* and in 1917 gathered similar information for *Bunting v. Oregon* to make the case for an eight-hour workday.

5. John Dewey (1859–1952). A philosopher, psychologist and education reformer, Dewey was an engaged activist, a prolific writer for popular magazines and the leading exemplar of American pragmatism. He founded the "laboratory school" at the University of Chicago to put his ideas about progressive education into practice. His ideas about "experiential learning" influenced several generations of educators. An early supporter

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of teachers' unions and academic freedom, he spoke out and organized against efforts to restrict freedom of ideas, helped found the NAACP and supported women's suffrage.

6. Lincoln Steffens (1866–1936). As a writer and editor for *McClure's* magazine and later for *The American Magazine*, he (along with colleagues Ida Tarbell and Ray Stannard Baker) was an influential practitioner of "muckraking" journalism. In *The Shame of the Cities* (1904), he exposed corruption by local governments, which took advantage of poor immigrants and colluded with business power brokers. After visiting the Soviet Union in 1919, he became an enthusiastic supporter of the Russian Revolution, famously proclaiming, "I have been over into the future, and it works." He later soured on Soviet-style communism.

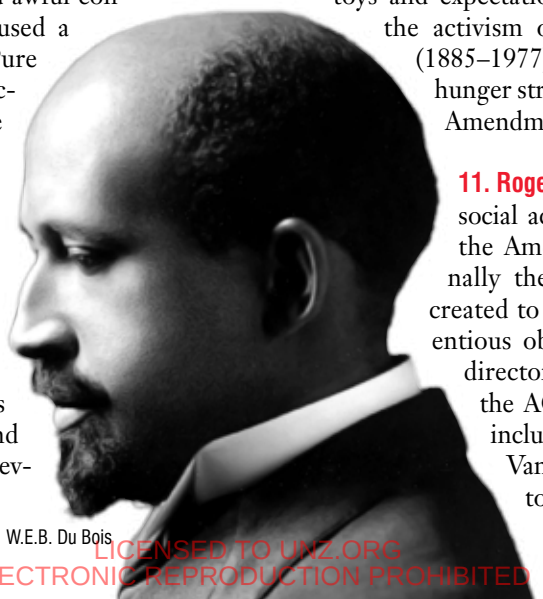
7. W.E.B. Du Bois (1868–1963) was a civil rights activist, sociologist, historian, polemicist and editor. He was the first African-American to receive a PhD from Harvard and a founder of the NAACP. In his studies and books he challenged America's ideas about race and helped lead the early crusade for civil rights. Du Bois's intellectual and political battles with Booker T. Washington shaped the ongoing debate about the nature of racism and the struggle for racial justice, summarized in his book *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), in which he described blacks' "double consciousness" and famously predicted, "The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line." From 1910 to 1934 he served as editor of *The Crisis*, the NAACP's monthly magazine, which became a highly visible and often controversial forum for criticism of white racism, lynching and segregation, and for information about the status of black Americans. It gave exposure to many young African-American writers, poets and agitators. Du Bois was a socialist, although he often disagreed with the party, particularly on matters of race. His writings had enormous influence on civil rights activists and on the burgeoning fields of black history and black studies.

8. Upton Sinclair (1878–1968). A Pulitzer Prize–winning author, Sinclair wrote ninety books, most of which were novels that exposed social injustice or studies of powerful institutions (including religion, the press and oil companies). His 1906 novel *The Jungle*, which vividly described awful conditions in the meatpacking industry, caused a public uproar that led to passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act. In 1934, in the depths of the Depression, he left the Socialist Party and won the Democratic nomination for governor of California on a platform to "end poverty in California." The state's powerful agricultural, oil and media industries mounted an expensive negative campaign to attack Sinclair and help elect his Republican opponent. Sinclair lost, but his campaign mobilized millions of voters, helped push FDR to the left and changed California politics for the next several decades.

9. Margaret Sanger (1879–1966) worked as a nurse among poor women on New York City's Lower East Side and became an advocate for women's health. In 1912 she gave up nursing and dedicated herself to the distribution of information about birth control (a term she's credited with inventing), risking imprisonment for violating the Comstock Act, which forbade distribution of birth control devices or information. She wrote articles on health for the Socialist Party paper *The Call* and wrote several books, including *What Every Girl Should Know* (1916) and *What Every Mother Should Know* (1916). In 1921 she founded the American Birth Control League, which eventually became Planned Parenthood. In 1916 she set up the first birth control clinic in the United States, and the following year she was arrested for "creating a public nuisance." Her activism helped change public opinion and led to changes in laws giving doctors the right to give birth control advice (and later, birth control devices) to patients.

10. Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860–1935) was a pathbreaking feminist, humanist and socialist, whose lectures and writing challenged the dominant ideas about women's role in society and helped shape the movement for women's suffrage and rights. After attending her first suffrage convention, in 1886, she began writing a column on suffrage for *The People*. She addressed the 1896 conference of the National American Woman Suffrage Association in Washington and testified for suffrage before Congress. She called women "subcitizens" and their disenfranchisement "arbitrary, unjust, unwise." Her semiautobiographical short story "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892) described a woman who suffers a mental breakdown resulting from a "rest cure"—prescribed by her physician husband—of complete long-term isolation in her bedroom. In many books, including *Women and Economics* (1898), *The Home* (1903), *Human Work* (1904) and *The Man-Made World* (1911), she argued that women would be equal to men only when they were economically independent, and she encouraged women to work outside the home and for men and women to share housework. She believed that housekeeping, cooking and childcare should be professionalized. Girls and boys, she thought, should be raised with the same clothes, toys and expectations. Gilman's efforts complemented the activism of feminists like Alice Stokes Paul (1885–1977), who organized pickets, parades and hunger strikes to win passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920.

11. Roger Baldwin (1884–1981). A pacifist and social activist, he was a founder, in 1917, of the American Civil Liberties Union (originally the National Civil Liberties Bureau), created to defend the rights of antiwar conscientious objectors, and served as its executive director until 1950. Under his leadership the ACLU litigated many landmark cases, including the Scopes Trial, the Sacco and Vanzetti murder trial and the challenge to the ban on James Joyce's *Ulysses*.



W.E.B. Du Bois

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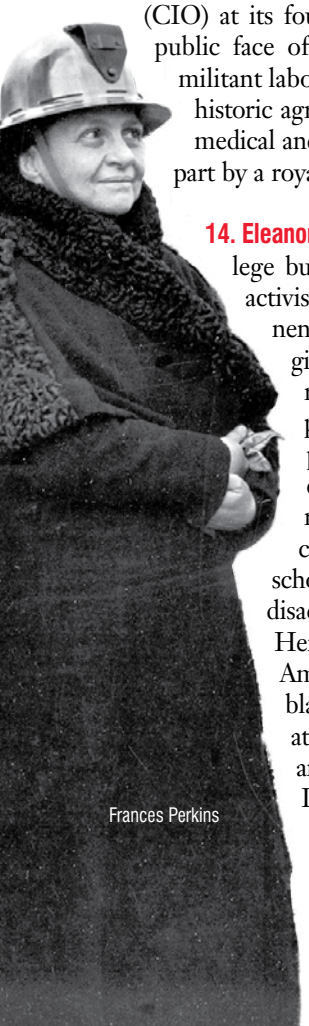
12. Frances Perkins (1880–1965) was labor secretary for the first twelve years of Franklin Roosevelt's presidency and the first woman to hold a cabinet post. Within FDR's inner circle she advocated for Social Security, the minimum wage, workers' right to unionize and other New Deal economic reforms. Inspired by Jacob Riis's exposé of New York's slums, *How the Other Half Lives*, and by reformer Florence Kelley, she joined the settlement house movement and worked for the New York Consumers' League, lobbying the state legislature to limit the workweek for women and children to fifty-four hours. She marched in suffrage parades and gave street-corner speeches in favor of women's suffrage. She joined the Socialist Party but soon switched to the Democratic Party. In 1918 New York Governor Al Smith appointed her to the state's Industrial Commission, and in 1929 Governor Franklin Roosevelt appointed her the state's industrial commissioner. She expanded factory investigations, reduced the workweek for women to forty-eight hours and championed minimum wage and unemployment insurance laws, all ideas she took to Washington when she joined FDR's cabinet.

13. John L. Lewis (1880–1969). Joining his father as a miner at 16, Lewis became active in the United Mine Workers of America, working his way up to president, a post he held from 1920 to 1960. Under Lewis the UMWA committed money and staff to organizing drives in the rubber, auto and steel industries, helping to create a national wave of industrial unionism. In 1938 Lewis was elected president of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) at its founding convention and became a major public face of the nation's growing and increasingly militant labor movement. In 1948 the UMWA won a historic agreement with coal companies establishing medical and pension benefits for miners, financed in part by a royalty on every ton of coal mined.


Frances Perkins

14. Eleanor Roosevelt (1884–1962) was born to privilege but became one of the most visible social activists of her generation. She used her prominence as first lady to advocate for reform, giving visibility to movements for workers' rights, women's rights and civil rights and pushing FDR and his advisers to support progressive legislation. She held press conferences and voiced her opinions in radio broadcasts and a regular newspaper column. She visited coal mines, slums and schools to draw attention to the plight of the disadvantaged and to lobby for reform laws. Her resignation from the Daughters of the American Revolution—to protest its ban on black singer Marian Anderson performing at Constitution Hall—made a controversial and powerful statement for racial justice. In 1948, as a delegate to the United Nations, she helped draft the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which affirmed equality for all people regardless of race, creed or color.

15. Norman Thomas (1884–1968) was America's most visible socialist from the 1930s through the '50s. Ordained a Presbyterian minister in 1911, he became a crusader for the "social gospel" as the leader of several churches and head of a settlement house in Harlem. His pacifism and opposition to World War I led him to join the Socialist Party. After writing about reform issues for Christian publications, he joined *The Nation* as associate editor. In 1922 he became co-director of the League for Industrial Democracy and was a founder of the National Civil Liberties Bureau. He ran for governor, mayor, State Senate and City Council on the Socialist Party ticket. Starting in 1928 he ran for president six times, gaining a public voice as an articulate national "conscience" and spokesman for democratic socialism. Thomas was one of the few public figures to oppose the internment of Japanese-Americans. He helped start the racially integrated Southern Farmers Tenants Union, campaigned for labor rights, birth control and allowing Jewish victims of Nazism to enter the United States. At his eightieth birthday celebration, in 1964, he received plaudits from Martin Luther King Jr., Chief Justice Earl Warren and Vice President-elect Hubert Humphrey. An early critic of the Vietnam War, he gave a famous antiwar speech in 1968, proclaiming, "I come to cleanse the American flag, not burn it."

16. A.J. Muste (1885–1967). Like Thomas, Muste graduated from Union Theological Seminary. He began his career as a Dutch Reformed Church minister but soon became a Quaker as well as a leading pacifist, antiwar activist, socialist and union organizer. In the early 1920s he led Brookwood Labor College, a training center for union activists, and during the 1930s he led several key sit-downs. From 1940 to 1953 he headed the religious pacifist organization Fellowship of Reconciliation and helped found the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), a militant civil rights group that pioneered the use of civil disobedience and trained many movement activists. In the 1960s he led delegations of pacifists and religious leaders to Saigon and Hanoi to try to end the war in Vietnam.

17. Sidney Hillman (1887–1946). An immigrant from Lithuania, garment worker in Chicago and lifelong socialist, Hillman led successful strikes and organizing drives, became a union leader and served as president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America from 1914 to 1946. By 1920 the union had contracts with 85 percent of the nation's garment manufacturers (representing some 177,000 workers) and had reduced the workweek to forty-four hours. In the 1920s Hillman's ACWA pioneered "social unionism," including union-sponsored co-op housing, unemployment insurance for union members and a bank to make loans to members and businesses with union contracts. One of the founders, in 1935, of the CIO (and later its vice president), Hillman became an influential adviser to FDR and Senator Robert Wagner, helping draft laws for workers' rights. As chair of the CIO's first political action committee in 1943, he mobilized union voters in election campaigns across the country, which became the model for building an electoral organization among union members.

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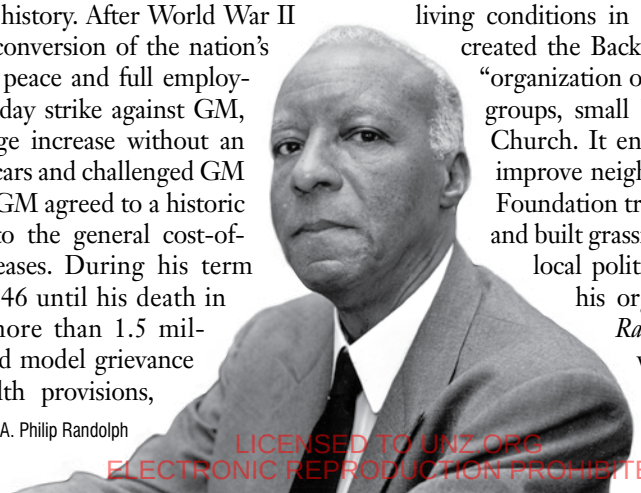
18. Henry Wallace (1888–1965). As FDR's agriculture secretary (1933–40) and then vice president (1940–44), Wallace played a central role in pushing for progressive New Deal initiatives, especially policies to help struggling farmers. He was a crusading publisher of *Wallaces' Farmer* magazine and an Iowa farmer who pioneered the use of high-yield strains of corn. Wallace became increasingly radical and outspoken, and FDR dumped him as vice president in 1944. After serving as editor of *The New Republic*, he made an unsuccessful run for president in 1948 on the Progressive Party ticket, opposing racial segregation, the cold war and Truman's tepid support for unions. Wallace was abandoned by many liberals, who thought his platform was too radical and who worried that his campaign would take enough votes away from Truman to turn the White House over to the Republicans. He garnered less than 2 percent of the popular vote.

19. A. Philip Randolph (1889–1979) founded the first African-American labor union, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, in the 1920s. A leading socialist writer, orator and civil rights pioneer, he built bridges between the civil rights and labor movements. He edited the socialist newspaper *The Messenger*. In an early editorial, Randolph wrote: "The history of the labor movement in America proves that the employing classes recognize no race lines. They will exploit a White man as readily as a Black man.... They will exploit any race or class in order to make profits. The combination of Black and White workers will be a powerful lesson to the capitalists of the solidarity of labor." Randolph helped bring African-Americans into the labor movement while also criticizing union leaders for excluding blacks. In 1941, as the country was gearing up for war, Randolph threatened to organize a march on Washington to protest blacks' exclusion from well-paid defense industry jobs. The strategy worked. In June 1941 FDR signed an executive order that called for an end to discrimination in defense plant jobs, America's first "fair employment practices" reform. Randolph led the 1963 March on Washington, in which more than 250,000 Americans joined together under the slogan "Jobs and Freedom."

20. Walter Reuther (1907–70) rose from the factory floor to help build the United Auto Workers into a major force in the auto industry, the labor movement and the left wing of the Democratic Party. He helped shape the modern labor movement, which created the first mass middle class. He led the 1937 sit-down at the General Motors factory in Flint, Michigan, a major turning point in labor history. After World War II he pushed for a large-scale conversion of the nation's industrial might to promote peace and full employment. In 1946 he led a 116-day strike against GM, calling for a 30 percent wage increase without an increase in the retail price of cars and challenged GM to "open its books." In 1948 GM agreed to a historic contract tying wage raises to the general cost-of-living and productivity increases. During his term as UAW president, from 1946 until his death in 1970, the union grew to more than 1.5 million members and negotiated model grievance procedures, safety and health provisions, pensions, health benefits and "supplemental unemployment benefits" that lifted union members into the middle class and helped cushion the hardships of economic booms and busts. In the 1960s he led the labor movement's support for civil rights, was an early opponent of the Vietnam War and an ally of Cesar Chavez's effort to organize migrant farmworkers. Reuther became president of the CIO in 1952 and helped negotiate the 1955 merger of the AFL and CIO.

21. Paul Robeson (1898–1976) was perhaps the most all-around talented American of the twentieth century. He was an internationally renowned concert singer, actor, college football star and professional athlete, writer, linguist (he sang in twenty-five languages), scholar, orator, lawyer and activist in the civil rights, union and peace movements. Though he was one of the century's most famous figures, his name was virtually erased from memory by government persecution during the McCarthy era. The son of a runaway slave, Robeson won a four-year academic scholarship to Rutgers, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and graduated as valedictorian. Despite violence and racism from teammates, he won fifteen varsity letters in sports (baseball, football, basketball and track) and was twice named to the All-American Football Team. He attended Columbia Law School, then took a job with a law firm but quit when a white secretary refused to take dictation from him. He never practiced law again. In London, Robeson earned international acclaim for his lead role in *Othello* (1944). He starred in many plays and musicals and made eleven films, many with political themes. He promoted African independence, labor unions, friendship between the United States and the Soviet Union, African-American culture, civil liberties and Jewish refugees fleeing Hitler's Germany. In 1945 he headed an organization that challenged Truman to support an anti-lynching law. Because of his political views, his performances were constantly harassed. In the late 1940s he was blacklisted. Most of his concerts were canceled, and his passport was revoked in 1950.

22. Saul Alinsky (1909–72) is known as the founder of modern community organizing. He taught Americans, especially the urban poor and working class, how to organize to improve conditions in their communities. Trained as a criminologist at the University of Chicago, he realized that criminal behavior was a symptom of poverty and powerlessness. In 1939, to improve living conditions in a Chicago slum near the stockyards, he created the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council, an "organization of organizations" comprising unions, youth groups, small businesses, block clubs and the Catholic Church. It engaged in pickets, strikes and boycotts to improve neighborhood conditions. His Industrial Areas Foundation trained organizers (including Cesar Chavez) and built grassroots groups in different cities, challenging local political bosses and corporations. He codified his organizing ideas in two books—*Reveille for Radicals* (1946) and *Rules for Radicals* (1971)—which influenced several generations of progressive movements and activists.



AP IMAGES

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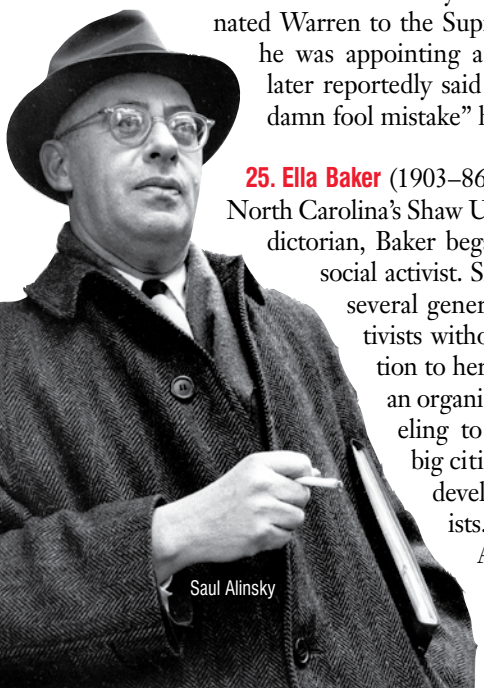
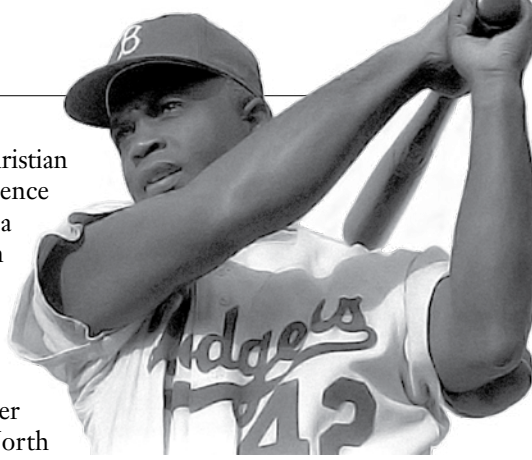
23. Woody Guthrie (1912–67), the legendary songwriter and folk singer, is best known for "This Land Is Your Land," considered America's alternative national anthem. He traveled from his native Oklahoma across the nation, writing songs about migrant workers, union struggles, government public works projects and the country's natural beauty, including "I Ain't Got No Home," "Tom Joad," "So Long It's Been Good to Know Yuh," "Roll on Columbia," "Pastures of Plenty," "Grand Coulee Dam" and "Deportee." As a member of the Almanac Singers, Guthrie wrote and performed protest songs on behalf of unions and radical organizations. Many of his songs are still recorded by other artists and have influenced generations of performers, including Bob Dylan, Joan Baez and Bruce Springsteen.

24. Earl Warren (1891–1974), chief justice from 1953 to 1969, took the Supreme Court in an unprecedented liberal direction. With the help of progressive justices William O. Douglass and William J. Brennan, the Warren Court dramatically expanded civil rights and civil liberties. The Republican Warren used his considerable political skills to guarantee that the 1954 ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* was unanimous. In another landmark case, *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963), the Warren Court ruled that courts are required to provide attorneys for defendants in criminal cases who cannot afford their own lawyers. In *New York Times Co. v. Sullivan* (1964), the Court significantly expanded free speech by requiring proof of "actual malice" in libel suits against public figures. The 1965 *Griswold v. Connecticut* decision established the right to privacy and laid the groundwork for *Roe v. Wade* (1973). In *Miranda v. Arizona* (1966), the Court ruled that detained criminal suspects, prior to police questioning, must be informed of their constitutional right to an attorney and against self-incrimination. After serving as Alameda County district attorney, Warren was elected California's attorney general in 1938 and four years later was elected governor, serving until 1953. In that post he approved the rounding up of Japanese-Americans into detention camps. In 1948 he was the Republican Party's unsuccessful vice presidential candidate on a ticket with Thomas Dewey. When Eisenhower nominated Warren to the Supreme Court, he thought he was appointing a conservative jurist and later reportedly said that it was the "biggest damn fool mistake" he'd ever made.


Saul Alinsky

ALINSKY: AP IMAGES; ROBINSON: LOOK MAGAZINE PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION (LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

25. Ella Baker (1903–86). After graduating from North Carolina's Shaw University in 1927 as valedictorian, Baker began a lifelong career as a social activist. She served as a mentor to several generations of civil rights activists without drawing much attention to herself. In 1940 she became an organizer for the NAACP, traveling to many small towns and big cities across the South and developing a network of activists. In 1957 Baker moved to Atlanta to help Martin Luther King Jr. organize the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), running a voter registration campaign. After black college students organized a sit-in at the Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, on February 1, 1960, Baker left the SCLC to help the students spread the sit-in movement. That April she helped them create the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) at a conference at her alma mater.


Jackie Robinson

26. I.F. Stone (1907–89) was an investigative journalist whose persistent research uncovered government corruption and wrongdoing. After a career as a reporter for several daily newspapers (including *PM*, a left-wing newspaper in New York City), he was Washington editor of *The Nation* from 1940 to 1946. In 1953, at the height of McCarthyism, he started *I.F. Stone's Weekly*, keeping the newsletter going until 1971. He was under constant attack during the cold war for his opposition to Senator Joseph McCarthy and for his reporting about the excesses of the FBI under J. Edgar Hoover. Stone was one of a handful of journalists who challenged LBJ's claim that the North Vietnamese had attacked a US destroyer in the Tonkin Gulf, which had given the president an excuse to go to war in Vietnam. He wrote fifteen books, including, at age 81, *The Trial of Socrates* (1988). He inspired generations of muckraking reporters.

27. Jackie Robinson (1919–72). A four-sport athletic star in high school in Pasadena and then at the University of California, Los Angeles, Robinson played in the Negro Leagues before becoming the first African-American to play in the major leagues, in 1947. He endured physical and verbal abuse on and off the field, showing remarkable courage, while helping pave the way for the civil rights movement. Martin Luther King Jr. said to Don Newcombe, Robinson's teammate, "You, Jackie and Roy [Campanella] will never know how easy you made it for me to do my job." During World War II Robinson faced a court-martial for refusing to move on a segregated bus outside a military base in Texas. As Rookie of the Year in 1947, Most Valuable Player in 1949 and a six-time All-Star, he led the Brooklyn Dodgers to several pennants. During and after his playing days, he joined picket lines and marches, wrote a newspaper column that attacked racism and raised funds for the NAACP. In testimony before Congress while still a player, he condemned America's racism but also criticized Paul Robeson's radicalism, a remark he later said he regretted.

28. Rachel Carson (1907–64) was a marine biologist and nature writer who helped inspire the modern environmental movement, especially with her 1962 book, *Silent Spring*. The book exposed the dangers of synthetic pesticides and led to a nationwide ban on DDT and other pesticides. The movement led to the creation

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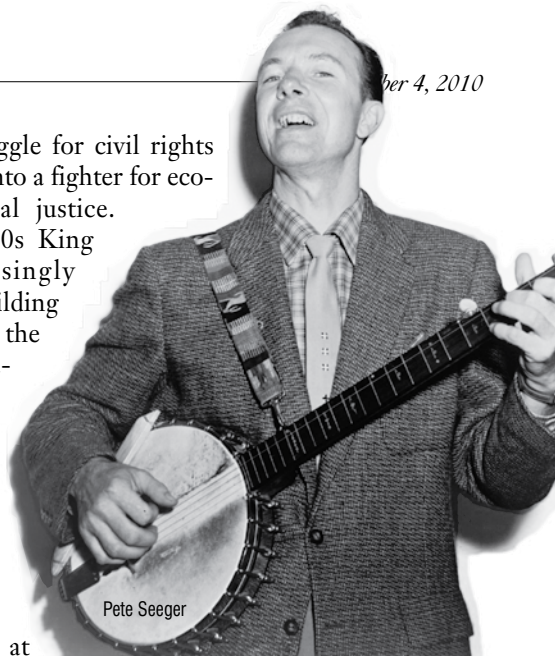
of the Environmental Protection Agency in 1970 and many environmental laws. She laid the groundwork for the growing consciousness of humankind's stewardship of the planet and a new radical thinking about the environment, most prominently by Barry Commoner, another biologist, whose first books focused on the dangers of nuclear testing and whose *The Closing Circle* (1971) examined the link between capitalism's thirst for growth and environmental dangers.

29. Thurgood Marshall (1908–93) was a leading civil rights lawyer and the first black Supreme Court justice, appointed by LBJ in 1967. As NAACP chief counsel, he led the battle in the courts for civil rights despite repressive conditions and a limited budget. He won his first Supreme Court case, *Chambers v. Florida*, in 1940 at age 32 and won twenty-nine out of the thirty-two cases he argued before the Court. Many of them were landmark decisions that helped dismantle segregation, including *Smith v. Allwright* (1944), *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1948), *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950) and *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents* (1950). His most famous legal victory was *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), in which the Court ruled that the "separate but equal" doctrine, established by *Plessy v. Ferguson*, violated the Constitution. On the Supreme Court he was an outspoken advocate for free speech and civil rights.

30. Harry Hay (1912–2002) co-founded America's first major gay rights organization in 1950. Educated at Stanford, Hay became a Communist Party member in Los Angeles in the 1930s and '40s but left in 1951 because it did not welcome his homosexuality. In December 1950 he organized the first semipublic homosexual discussion group, which soon became the Mattachine Society, known then as a "homophile" group. In 1952 the group led the defense of Dale Jennings, a gay man arrested in an entrapment case. The following year he helped start *ONE*, a magazine addressing homosexual rights. Hay later was often at odds with younger gay activists who wanted to join the political and cultural mainstream.

31. The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. (1929–68) helped change America's conscience, not only about civil rights but also about economic justice, poverty and war. As an inexperienced young pastor in Montgomery, Alabama, King was reluctantly thrust into the leadership of the bus boycott. During the 382-day boycott, King was arrested and abused and his home was bombed, but he emerged as a national figure and honed his leadership skills. In 1957 he helped launch the SCLC to spread the civil rights crusade to other cities. He helped lead local campaigns in Selma, Birmingham and other cities, and sought to keep the fractious civil rights movement together, including the NAACP, Urban League, SNCC, CORE and SCLC. Between 1957 and 1968 King traveled more than 6 million miles, spoke more than 2,500 times and was arrested at least twenty times while preaching the gospel of nonviolence. Today we view King as something of a saint; his birthday is a national holiday and his name adorns schools and street signs. But in his day the establishment considered King a dangerous troublemaker. He was harassed by the FBI and vilified in the media. The struggle for civil rights radicalized him into a fighter for economic and social justice. During the 1960s King became increasingly committed to building bridges between the civil rights and labor movements. He was in Memphis in 1968 to support striking sanitation workers when he was assassinated. In 1964, at 35, King was the youngest man to have received the Nobel Peace Prize. Some civil rights activists worried that his opposition to the Vietnam War, announced in 1967, would create a backlash against civil rights; but instead it helped turn the tide of public opinion against the war.


Pete Seeger

32. Bayard Rustin (1912–87) was one of the nation's most talented organizers, typically working behind the scenes as an aide to Muste, Randolph and King, in large part because they feared that his homosexuality would stigmatize their causes and organizations. Randolph appointed him to lead the youth wing of the 1941 March on Washington movement. Rustin was upset when Randolph called off the march after FDR issued an executive order banning racial discrimination in the defense industries. Rustin then began a series of organizing jobs in the peace movement, honing his skills with the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the American Friends Service Committee, the Socialist Party and the War Resisters League. In 1947 he began organizing a series of nonviolent acts of civil disobedience in the South and border states to provoke a challenge to Jim Crow practices in interstate transportation. Between 1947 and 1952 Rustin traveled to India and Africa to learn more about nonviolence and the Gandhian independence movement. Rustin spent time in Montgomery and Birmingham advising King about nonviolent tactics. Coming full circle, Randolph named him chief organizer of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, diplomatically bringing together fractious civil rights leaders and organizations.

33. C. Wright Mills (1916–62). In the 1950s, when most social scientists were celebrating America's postwar prosperity, Mills, a Columbia University sociologist, was warning about the dangers of the concentration of wealth and power in what he called, in his 1956 book of the same name, "the power elite." He also warned about the US attitude toward Cuba in *Listen, Yankee*. He was shunned by most fellow sociologists, but his ideas—outlined in books, scholarly journals and many magazine articles—became popular among 1960s activists. Mills's then-radical notion that big business, the military and government can be too closely connected is now conventional wisdom.

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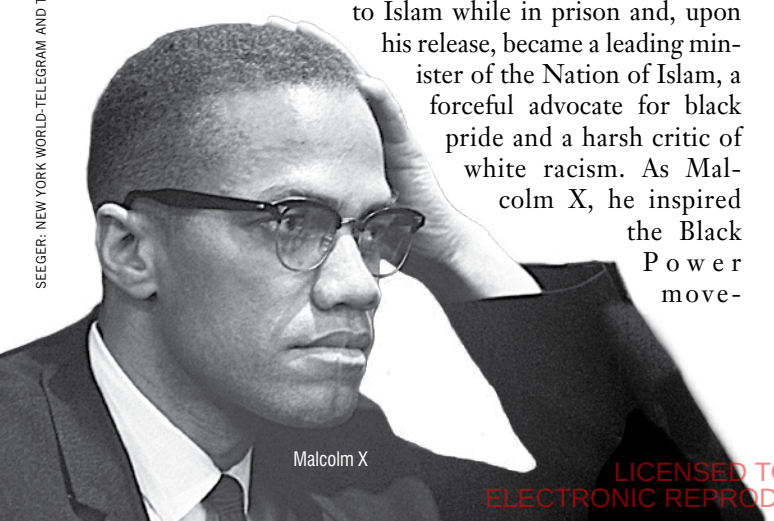
34. John Kenneth Galbraith (1908–2006) was the century's leading progressive American economist. His many books and articles helped popularize Keynesian ideas, especially *The Affluent Society* (1958), which coined the title phrase but also warned about the widening gap between private wealth and public squalor. In *The New Industrial State* (1967), the Harvard professor criticized the concentration of corporate power and recommended stronger government regulations. Active in politics, he served in the administrations of FDR, Truman, JFK and LBJ, including as Kennedy's ambassador to India.

35. David Brower (1912–2000) was a pioneer of the modern environmental movement. Brower began his career as a world-class mountaineer. He served as the Sierra Club's first executive director from 1952 to 1969, expanding the group's membership from 7,000 to 77,000 members. He led campaigns to establish ten new national parks and seashores and to stop dams in Dinosaur National Monument and Grand Canyon National Park. He was instrumental in gaining passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964, which protects millions of acres of public lands in pristine condition. He founded Friends of the Earth and then the League of Conservation Voters, mobilizing environmentalists for political action. In 1982 he founded Earth Island Institute to support environmental projects around the world.

36. Pete Seeger (1919–) wrote or popularized "We Shall Overcome," "Turn, Turn, Turn," "If I Had a Hammer," "Guantanamera," "Wimoweh," "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" and other songs that have inspired people to take action. On his own and as a member of the Almanac Singers and the Weavers (which had several top-selling hits, including "Good Night, Irene," despite their opposition to commercialism), Seeger sang for unions, civil rights and antiwar groups, and other human rights causes in the United States and around the world. He introduced Americans to the music of other cultures and catalyzed the "folk revival" of the late 1950s and '60s. He was a founder of the Newport Folk Festival and *Sing Out!* magazine. He was also an environmental pioneer, founding the sloop *Clearwater* and raising consciousness and money to push government to clean up the Hudson River and other waterways.

37. Malcolm X (1925–65). A onetime street hustler involved in drugs, prostitution and gambling, Malcolm Little converted to Islam while in prison and, upon his release, became a leading minister of the Nation of Islam, a forceful advocate for black pride and a harsh critic of white racism. As Malcolm X, he inspired the Black Power movement, which competed with the integrationist wing of the civil rights movement for the loyalty of African-Americans, and wrote (with Alex Haley) the bestselling *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. His father—an outspoken Baptist preacher and avid supporter of Black Nationalist leader Marcus Garvey—faced death threats from the white supremacist organization Black Legion and was killed in 1931. As a popular minister for the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X preached a form of black separatism and self-help. One of his recruits was boxer Muhammad Ali. In 1964, disillusioned by Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad's behavior, Malcolm X left the organization. That year, he traveled to Mecca and, in his words, met "all races, all colors, blue-eyed blondes to black-skinned Africans in true brotherhood!" When he returned to the United States he had a new view of racial integration. He was shot and killed on February 21, 1965, after giving a speech in Manhattan's Audubon Ballroom. Many suspect that Elijah Muhammad had a hand in his murder.



Malcolm X

SEEGER: NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND THE SUN NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION (LIBRARY OF CONGRESS); MALCOLM X: U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT MAGAZINE PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION (LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

38. Betty Friedan (1921–2006). Her book *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) helped change American attitudes toward women's equality, popularized the phrase "sexism" and catalyzed the modern feminist movement. In the 1940s and 1950s she worked as a left-wing labor journalist before focusing her writing and activism on women's rights. She co-founded the National Organization for Women in 1966 and the National Women's Political Caucus (along with Gloria Steinem, Fannie Lou Hamer, Bella Abzug and Shirley Chisholm) in 1971.

39. Michael Harrington (1928–89). His book *The Other America* (1962) exposed Americans to the reality of poverty in their midst. In his 20s, Harrington joined Dorothy Day's Catholic Workers movement, lived among the poor at the Catholic Worker house and edited the *Catholic Worker* from 1951 to 1953. *The Other America* catapulted Harrington into the national spotlight. He became an adviser to LBJ's "War on Poverty" and a popular lecturer on college campuses, at union halls and academic conferences and before religious congregations. Inheriting Norman Thomas's mantle, he was America's leading socialist thinker, writer and speaker for four decades, providing ideas to King, Reuther, Robert and Ted Kennedy, and other leaders. Harrington wrote fifteen other books on social issues and helped build bridges between left intellectuals and academics and the civil rights and labor movements. He encouraged activists to promote "the left wing of the possible." He founded Democratic Socialists of America, which remains the nation's largest socialist organization.

40. Cesar Chavez (1927–93). Building on his experiences as a farmworker and community organizer in the barrios of Oakland and Los Angeles, Chavez did what many thought impossible—organize the most vulnerable Americans, immigrant farmworkers, into a successful union, improving conditions for California's lettuce and grape pickers. Founded in the 1960s, the United Farm Workers pioneered the use of consumer boycotts, enlisting other unions, churches and students to join in a nationwide boycott of nonunion grapes, wine and lettuce. Chavez led demonstrations, voter registration drives, fasts,

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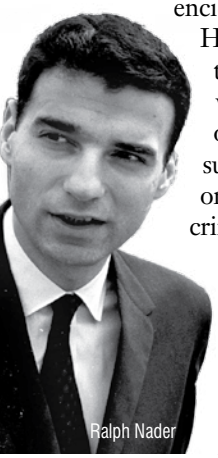
boycotts and other nonviolent protests to gain public support. The UFW won a campaign to enact California's Agricultural Labor Relations Act, which Governor Jerry Brown signed into law in 1975, giving farmworkers collective bargaining rights they lacked (and still lack) under federal labor law. The UFW inspired and trained several generations of organizers who remain active in today's progressive movement.

41. Harvey Milk (1930–78) was elected to San Francisco's Board of Supervisors in 1977, making him the first openly gay elected official in California and the most visible gay politician in the country. He moved to San Francisco in 1972 and set up a camera shop in the city's Castro district, quickly getting involved in local politics. Called "the mayor of Castro Street," Milk was a charismatic gay rights activist who built alliances with other constituencies, including neighborhood and tenants' groups. He became an ally of the labor movement by getting gay bars to remove Coors beer, which unions were boycotting for Coors's opposition to union organizing in its breweries and the Coors family's support for right-wing causes. As city supervisor, he orchestrated passage of a law that prohibited discrimination in housing and employment based on sexual orientation. In 1978 he led the opposition to a statewide ballot measure (the Briggs initiative) to ban homosexuals from jobs as schoolteachers. On November 27, 1978, he was killed by Dan White, a disgruntled former city supervisor who disagreed with Milk and Mayor George Moscone, whom he also assassinated that day.


Ralph Nader

42. Ralph Nader (1934–). Since 1965, when he published his exposé of the auto industry, *Unsafe at Any Speed*, Nader has inspired, educated and mobilized millions of Americans to fight for a better environment, safer consumer products, safer workplaces and a more accountable government. Thanks to Nader, our cars are safer, our air and water are cleaner and our food is healthier. He raised awareness about the dangers of nuclear power and helped stop the construction of nuclear power plants. Nader played an important role in milestones such as the Freedom of Information Act, the Clean Air Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Superfund program, the Environmental Protection Act, the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the Occupational Safety and Health Act. Nader built a network of organizations to research and lobby against corporate abuse, training tens of thousands of college students and others in the skills of citizen activism. He has written many books, all focusing on how citizens can make America more democratic. During the 1970s and '80s Nader topped most polls as the nation's most trusted person. He ran for president four times, most controversially in 2000, when as a Green Party candidate he won votes in Florida that may have cost Democrat Al Gore the election.

43. Gloria Steinem (1934–) helped popularize feminist ideas as a writer and activist. Her 1969 article "After Black Power, Women's Liberation" helped establish her as a national spokeswoman for the women's liberation movement and for reproductive rights. In 1970 she led the Women's Strike for Equality march in New York along with Betty Friedan and Bella Abzug. In 1972 she founded *Ms.* magazine, which became the leading feminist publication. Her frequent articles and appearances on TV and at rallies made her feminism's most prominent public figure. She co-founded the National Women's Political Caucus, the Ms. Foundation for Women, Choice USA, the Women's Media Center and the Coalition of Labor Union Women. In 1984 she was arrested, along with Coretta Scott King, more than twenty members of Congress and other activists, for protesting apartheid in South Africa. She also joined protests opposing the Gulf War in 1991 and the Iraq War in 2003.

44. Tom Hayden (1939–) was a founder of Students for a Democratic Society in 1960 and wrote its Port Huron Statement, a manifesto of the postwar baby boom generation. He worked as a community organizer in Newark and helped link student activists to the civil rights movement and later the antiwar movement. He made several high-profile trips to Cambodia and North Vietnam to challenge US military involvement in Southeast Asia. Hayden was the first leading 1960s radical activist to run for major political office, challenging Senator John Tunney of California in the Democratic primary of 1976. He was later elected to the California legislature, where he served for eighteen years as an environmental and consumer advocate, while continuing his antiwar activism, gang intervention work and writing for *The Nation* and other publications. He is the author of seventeen books.

45. The Rev. Jesse Jackson (1941–). As a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1984 and 1988, Jackson, a Baptist minister and aide to King, popularized the idea of a progressive, multiracial and socially diverse "rainbow coalition." After the 1965 march to Selma, Jackson moved to Chicago to head the city's SCLC office and to start Operation Breadbasket and later Operation PUSH, which pioneered the use of boycotts and other pressure tactics to get private corporations to hire African-Americans and do business with black-owned firms. In his second bid for the White House, Jackson won seven primaries and four caucuses. He also gained influence by arranging exchanges or releases of US political prisoners in Syria, Cuba and Belgrade.

Gloria Steinem

46. Muhammad Ali (1942–). Born Cassius Clay in Louisville, Ali became an Olympic gold medal boxer in 1960, three-time heavyweight champion of the world, a highly visible opponent of the Vietnam War and a symbol of pride for African-Americans and Africans. He called himself "the greatest," composed poems that predicted the round in which he'd knock out his next opponent

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and told reporters that he could "float like a butterfly, sting like a bee." In 1964, soon after winning the heavyweight championship, he revealed that he was a member of the Nation of Islam, changing his name. Two years later, Ali refused to be drafted into the military, stating that his religious beliefs prevented him from fighting in Vietnam. He said, "No Vietnamese ever called me nigger," a statement suggesting that US involvement in Southeast Asia was a form of colonialism and racism. The government denied his claim for conscientious objector status, and he was arrested for refusing induction. He was stripped of his heavyweight title, and his boxing license was suspended. He reclaimed the crown in 1974 by beating George Foreman in the so-called Rumble in the Jungle. For his boxing skills and political courage, he was among the most recognized people in the world in the 1960s and '70s.

47. Billie Jean King (1943–) was at the top of women's tennis for nearly two decades. She won her first Wimbledon singles title in 1966, piled up dozens of singles and doubles titles before retiring in 1984 and was ranked number one in the world for five years. She founded the Women's Tennis Association, the Women's Sports Foundation and *WomenSports* magazine. She championed Title IX legislation, which equalized opportunities for women on and off the playing field. In 1972 she signed a controversial statement, published in *Ms.*, that she had had an abortion, putting her on the front lines of the battle for reproductive rights. In 1972 she became the first woman to be named *Sports Illustrated*'s "Sportsperson of the Year." In 1981 she was the first major female professional athlete to come out as a lesbian. She has consistently spoken out for women and their right to earn comparable money in tennis and other sports.

48. Bill Moyers (1934–) served as JFK's deputy director of the Peace Corps, LBJ's press secretary, publisher of *Newsday* and commentator on CBS. But he had his greatest influence as a documentary filmmaker and interviewer on PBS for three decades before retiring earlier this year. Following in the footsteps of broadcaster Edward R. Murrow, Moyers used TV as a tool to expose political and corporate wrongdoing and tell stories about ordinary people working together for justice. Like Studs Terkel, he introduced America to great thinkers, activists and everyday heroes typically ignored by mainstream media. Reflecting the populism of his humble Texas roots and the progressive convictions of his religious training (he is an ordained Baptist minister), Moyers produced dozens of hard-hitting investigative documentaries revealing corporate abuse of workers and consumers, the corrupting influence of money in politics, the dangers of the religious right, the attacks on scientists over global warming, the power of community and union organizing, and many other topics. *Trade Secrets* (2001) uncovered the chemical industry's poisoning of American workers, consumers and communities. *Buying the War* (2007) investigated the media's failure to report the Bush administration's propaganda about weapons of mass destruction and other lies that led to the war in Iraq. A gifted storyteller, Moyers, on the air and in the pages of *The Nation* and elsewhere, roared with a combination of outrage and decency, exposing abuse and celebrating the country's history of activism.

AP IMAGES

49. Barbara Ehrenreich (1941–). In twenty books and hundreds of articles in mainstream newspapers and magazines as well as progressive outlets, she has popularized ideas about women's rights, poverty and class inequality, and America's healthcare crisis. Beginning with *The American Health Empire* (1971), *Complaints and Disorders: The Sexual Politics of Sickness* (1973) and other books, she exposed the way the healthcare system discriminates against women and the poor, helping efforts to change the practices of hospitals, medical schools and physicians. In *The Mean Season* (1987), *Fear of Falling* (1989), *The Worst Years of Our Lives* (1990) and *Bait and Switch* (2005), she exposed the downside of America's class system for the poor and the middle class. *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* (2001), a bestselling first-person account of her yearlong sojourn in low-wage jobs, documented the hardships facing the working poor and helped energize the burgeoning "living wage" movement. She is co-chair of Democratic Socialists of America.

50. Michael Moore (1954–). In the tradition of earlier muckraking journalists, Moore has used his biting wit, eye for human foibles, anger at injustice, faith in the common sense of ordinary people and skills as a filmmaker, author and public speaker to draw attention to some of America's most chronic problems. His first film, the low-budget documentary *Roger & Me* (1989), examined the tragic human consequences of General Motors' decision to close its factory in Flint (Moore's hometown) and export the jobs to Mexico. *The Big One* (1997) examined corporate America's large-scale layoffs during a period of record profits, focusing on Nike's decision to outsource its shoe production to Indonesia. His documentaries in the twenty-first century have explored America's love affair with guns and violence (the Academy Award–winning *Bowling for Columbine*); the links between the Bush and bin Laden families in the aftermath of September 11 (*Fahrenheit 9/11*); healthcare reform (*Sicko*); and the financial crisis and the political influence of Wall Street (*Capitalism: A Love Story*). Moore also directed and hosted two TV news magazine shows—*TV Nation* (1994–95) and *The Awful Truth* (1999–2000)—that focused on controversial topics other shows avoided. The author of several books—*Downsize This!* (1996); *Stupid White Men* (2001); and *Dude, Where's My Country?* (2003)—Moore is a frequent TV commentator and regularly speaks at rallies to help build a movement for economic and social justice. ■

Fifty Most—Online

The history lesson continues at *The Nation*'s website (thenation.com/50progressives), where you'll find slide shows of Peter Dreier's fifty most influential progressives of the twentieth century, from Debs to Moore. You'll also discover links to additional material, including recommended biographies and, in many cases, articles from *The Nation*'s archive written by these progressive legends. Are you surprised that your favorite progressive isn't on the list? In an online readers' forum nominate progressives who you think made a difference, and help us start the list of the twenty-first century's most influential ones.

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Blackwater's Black Ops

Internal documents reveal the firm's clandestine work for multinationals and governments.

by JEREMY SCAHILL

Over the past several years, entities closely linked to the private security firm Blackwater have provided intelligence, training and security services to US and foreign governments as well as several multinational corporations, including Monsanto, Chevron, the Walt Disney Company, Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines and banking giants Deutsche Bank and Barclays, according to documents obtained by *The Nation*. Blackwater's work for corporations and government agencies was contracted using two companies owned by Blackwater's owner and founder, Erik Prince: Total Intelligence Solutions and the Terrorism Research Center (TRC). Prince is listed as the chairman of both companies in internal company documents, which show how the web of companies functions as a highly coordinated operation. Officials from Total Intelligence, TRC and Blackwater (which now calls itself Xe Services) did not respond to numerous requests for comment for this article.

One of the most incendiary details in the documents is that Blackwater, through Total Intelligence, sought to become the "intel arm" of Monsanto, offering to provide operatives to infiltrate activist groups organizing against the multinational biotech firm.

Governmental recipients of intelligence services and counterterrorism training from Prince's companies include the Kingdom of Jordan, the Canadian military and the Netherlands police, as well as several US military bases, including Fort Bragg, home of the elite Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), and Fort Huachuca, where military interrogators are trained, according to the documents. In addition, Blackwater worked through the companies for the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency and the US European Command.

On September 3 the *New York Times* reported that Blackwater had "created a web of more than 30 shell companies or subsidiaries in part to obtain millions of dollars in American government contracts after the security company came under intense criticism for reckless conduct in Iraq." The documents obtained by *The Nation* reveal previously unreported details of several such companies and open a rare window into the sensitive intelligence and security operations Blackwater performs for a range of powerful corporations and government agencies. The new evidence also sheds light on the key roles of several former top CIA officials who went on to work for Blackwater.

The coordinator of Blackwater's covert CIA business, former CIA paramilitary officer Enrique "Ric" Prado, set up a global network of foreign operatives, offering their "deniability" as a "big plus" for potential Blackwater customers, according to company documents. The CIA has long used proxy forces to carry out extralegal actions or to shield US government involvement in unsavory operations from scrutiny. In some cases, these "deniable" foreign forces don't even know who they are working for. Prado and Prince built up a network of such foreigners while Blackwater was at the center of the CIA's assassination program, beginning in 2004. They trained special missions units at one of Prince's properties in Virginia with the intent of hunting terrorism suspects globally, often working with foreign operatives. A former senior CIA official said the benefit of using Blackwater's foreign operatives in CIA operations was that "you wouldn't want to have American fingerprints on it."

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While the network was originally established for use in CIA operations, documents show that Prado viewed it as potentially valuable to other government agencies. In an e-mail in October 2007 with the subject line "Possible Opportunity in DEA—Read and Delete," Prado wrote to a Total Intelligence executive with a pitch for the Drug Enforcement Administration. That executive was an eighteen-year DEA veteran with extensive government connections who had recently joined the firm. Prado explained that Blackwater had developed "a rapidly growing, worldwide network of folks that can do everything from surveillance to ground truth to disruption operations." He added, "These are all foreign nationals (except for a few cases where US persons are the conduit but no longer 'play' on the street), so deniability is built in and should be a big plus."

The executive wrote back and suggested there "may be an interest" in those services. The executive suggested that "one of the best places to start may be the Special Operations Division, (SOD) which is located in Chantilly, VA," telling Prado the

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name of the special agent in charge. The SOD is a secretive joint command within the Justice Department, run by the DEA. It serves as the command-and-control center for some of the most sensitive counternarcotics and law enforcement operations conducted by federal forces. The executive also told Prado that US attachés in Mexico; Bogotá, Colombia; and Bangkok, Thailand, would potentially be interested in Prado's network. Whether this network was activated, and for what customers, cannot be confirmed. A former Blackwater employee who worked on the company's CIA program declined to comment on Prado's work for the company, citing its classified status.

In November 2007 officials from Prince's companies developed a pricing structure for security and intelligence services for private companies and wealthy individuals. One official wrote that Prado had the capacity to "develop infrastructures" and "conduct ground-truth and security activities." According to the pricing chart, potential customers could hire Prado and other Blackwater officials to operate in the United States and globally: in Latin America, North Africa, francophone countries, the Middle East, Europe, China, Russia, Japan, and Central and Southeast Asia. A four-man team headed by Prado for countersurveillance in the United States cost $33,600 weekly, while "safehouses" could be established for $250,000, plus operational costs. Identical services were offered globally. For $5,000 a day, clients could hire Prado or former senior CIA officials Cofer Black and Robert Richer for "representation" to national "decision-makers." Before joining Blackwater, Black, a twenty-eight-year CIA veteran, ran the agency's counterterrorism center, while Richer was the agency's deputy director of operations. (Neither Black nor Richer currently works for the company.)

As Blackwater became embroiled in controversy following the Nisour Square massacre, Prado set up his own company, Constellation Consulting Group (CCG), apparently taking some of Blackwater's covert CIA work with him, though he maintained close ties to his former employer. In an e-mail to a Total Intelligence executive in February 2008, Prado wrote that he "recently had major success in developing capabilities in Mali [Africa] that are of extreme interest to our major sponsor and which will soon launch a substantial effort via my small shop." He requested Total Intelligence's help in analyzing the "North Mali/Niger terrorist problem."

In October 2009 Blackwater executives faced a crisis when they could not account for their government-issued Secure Telephone Unit, which is used by the CIA, the National Security Agency and other military and intelligence services for secure communications. A flurry of e-mails were sent around as personnel from various Blackwater entities tried to locate the device. One former Blackwater official wrote that because he had left the company it was "not really my problem," while another declared, "I have no 'dog in this fight.'" Eventually, Prado stepped in, e-mailing the Blackwater officials to "pass my number" to the "OGA POC," meaning the Other Government Agency (parlance for CIA) Point of Contact.

What relationship Prado's CCG has with the CIA is not known. An early version of his company's website boasted that "CCG professionals have already conducted operations on five continents, and have proven their ability to meet the most demanding client needs" and that the company has the "ability to manage highly-classified contracts." CCG, the site said, "is uniquely positioned to deliver services that no other company can, and can deliver results in the most remote areas with little or no outside support." Among the services advertised were "Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence (human and electronic), Unconventional Military Operations, Counterdrug Operations, Aviation Services, Competitive Intelligence, Denied Area Access…and Paramilitary Training."

The Nation has previously reported on Blackwater's work for the CIA and JSOC in Pakistan. New documents reveal a history of activity relating to Pakistan by Blackwater. Former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto worked with the company when she returned to Pakistan to campaign for the 2008 elections, according to the documents. In October 2007, when media reports emerged that Bhutto had hired "American security," senior Blackwater official Robert Richer wrote to company executives, "We need to watch this carefully from a number of angles. If our name surfaces, the Pakistani press reaction will be very important. How that plays through the Muslim world will also need tracking." Richer wrote that "we should be prepared to [*sic*] a communique from an affiliate of Al-Qaida if our name surfaces (BW). That will impact the security profile." Clearly a word is missing in the e-mail or there is a typo that leaves unclear what Richer meant when he mentioned the Al Qaeda communiqué. Bhutto was assassinated two months later. Blackwater officials subsequently scheduled a meeting with her family representatives in Washington, in January 2008.

Blackwater set up a global network of foreign operatives, offering their 'deniability' as a 'big plus' for potential customers.

Through Total Intelligence and the Terrorism Research Center, Blackwater also did business with a range of multinational corporations. According to internal Total Intelligence communications, biotech giant Monsanto—the world's largest supplier of genetically modified seeds—hired the firm in 2008–09. The relationship between the two companies appears to have been solidified in January 2008 when Total Intelligence chair Cofer Black traveled to Zurich to meet with Kevin Wilson, Monsanto's security manager for global issues.

After the meeting in Zurich, Black sent an e-mail to other Blackwater executives, including to Prince and Prado at their Blackwater e-mail addresses. Black wrote that Wilson "understands that we can span collection from internet, to reach out, to boots on the ground on legit basis protecting the Monsanto [brand] name…. Ahead of the curve info and insight/heads up is what he is looking for." Black added that Total Intelligence "would develop into acting as intel arm of Monsanto." Black also noted that Monsanto was concerned about animal rights activ-

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ists and that they discussed how Blackwater "could have our person(s) actually join [activist] group(s) legally." Black wrote that initial payments to Total Intelligence would be paid out of Monsanto's "generous protection budget" but would eventually become a line item in the company's annual budget. He estimated the potential payments to Total Intelligence at between $100,000 and $500,000. According to documents, Monsanto paid Total Intelligence $127,000 in 2008 and $105,000 in 2009.

Reached by telephone and asked about the meeting with Black in Zurich, Monsanto's Wilson initially said, "I'm not going to discuss it with you." In a subsequent e-mail to *The Nation*, Wilson confirmed he met Black in Zurich and that Monsanto hired Total Intelligence in 2008 and worked with the company until early 2010. He denied that he and Black discussed infiltrating animal rights groups, stating "there was no such discussion." He claimed that Total Intelligence only provided Monsanto "with reports about the activities of groups or individuals that could pose a risk to company personnel or operations around the world which were developed by monitoring local media reports and other publicly available information. The subject matter ranged from information regarding terrorist incidents in Asia or kidnappings in Central America to scanning the content of activist blogs and websites." Wilson asserted that Black told him Total Intelligence was "a completely separate entity from Blackwater."

Through front companies, Blackwater sought to become the 'intel arm' of multinational corporations like biotech giant Monsanto.

Monsanto was hardly the only powerful corporation to enlist the services of Blackwater's constellation of companies. The Walt Disney Company hired Total Intelligence and TRC to do a "threat assessment" for potential film shoot locations in Morocco, with former CIA officials Black and Richer reaching out to their former Moroccan intel counterparts for information. The job provided a "good chance to impress Disney," one company executive wrote. How impressed Disney was is not clear; in 2009 the company paid Total Intelligence just $24,000.

Total Intelligence and TRC also provided intelligence assessments on China to Deutsche Bank. "The Chinese technical counterintelligence threat is one of the highest in the world," a TRC analyst wrote, adding, "Many four and five star hotel rooms and restaurants are live-monitored with both audio and video" by Chinese intelligence. He also said that computers, PDAs and other electronic devices left unattended in hotel rooms could be cloned. Cellphones using the Chinese networks, the analyst wrote, could have their microphones remotely activated, meaning they could operate as permanent listening devices. He concluded that Deutsche Bank reps should "bring no electronic equipment into China." Warning of the use of female Chinese agents, the analyst wrote, "If you don't have women coming onto you all the time at home, then you should be suspicious if they start coming onto you when you arrive in China." For these and other services, the bank paid Total Intelligence $70,000 in 2009.

TRC also did background checks on Libyan and Saudi businessmen for British banking giant Barclays. In February 2008 a TRC executive e-mailed Prado and Richer revealing that Barclays asked TRC and Total Intelligence for background research on the top executives from the Saudi Binladin Group (SBG) and their potential "associations/connections with the Royal family and connections with Osama bin Ladin." In his report, Richer wrote that SBG's chair, Bakr Mohammed bin Laden, "is well and favorably known to both arab and western intelligence service[s]" for cooperating in the hunt for Osama bin Laden. Another SBG executive, Sheikh Saleh bin Laden, is described by Richer as "a very savvy businessman" who is "committed to operating with full transparency to Saudi's security services" and is considered "the most vehement within the extended BL family in terms of criticizing UBL's actions and beliefs."

In August Blackwater and the State Department reached a $42 million settlement for hundreds of violations of US export control regulations. Among the violations cited was the unauthorized export of technical data to the Canadian military. Meanwhile, Blackwater's dealings with Jordanian officials are the subject of a federal criminal prosecution of five former top Blackwater executives. The Jordanian government paid Total Intelligence more than $1.6 million in 2009.

Some of the training Blackwater provided to Canadian military forces was in Blackwater/TRC's "Mirror Image" course, where trainees live as a mock Al Qaeda cell in an effort to understand the mindset and culture of insurgents. Company literature describes it as "a classroom and field training program designed to simulate terrorist recruitment, training, techniques and operational tactics." Documents show that in March 2009 Blackwater/TRC spent $6,500 purchasing local tribal clothing in Afghanistan as well as assorted "propaganda materials—posters, Pakistan Urdu maps, etc." for Mirror Image, and another $9,500 on similar materials this past January in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

According to internal documents, in 2009 alone the Canadian military paid Blackwater more than $1.6 million through TRC. A Canadian military official praised the program in a letter to the center, saying it provided "unique and valid cultural awareness and mission specific deployment training for our soldiers in Afghanistan," adding that it was "a very effective and operationally current training program that is beneficial to our mission."

This past summer Erik Prince put Blackwater up for sale and moved to Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. But he doesn't seem to be leaving the shadowy world of security and intelligence. He says he moved to Abu Dhabi because of its "great proximity to potential opportunities across the entire Middle East, and great logistics," adding that it has "a friendly business climate, low to no taxes, free trade and no out of control trial lawyers or labor unions. It's pro-business and opportunity." It also has no extradition treaty with the United States. ■

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WikiLeaks and Hacktivist Culture

by PETER LUDLOW

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In recent months there has been considerable discussion about the WikiLeaks phenomenon, and understandably so, given the volume and sensitivity of the documents the website has released. What this discussion has revealed, however, is that the media and government agencies believe there is a single protagonist to be concerned with—something of a James Bond villain, if you will—when in fact the protagonist is something altogether different: an informal network of revolutionary individuals bound by a shared ethic and culture.

According to conventional wisdom, the alleged protagonist is, of course, WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, and the discussion of him has ranged from Raffi Khatchadourian's June portrait in *The New Yorker*, which makes Assange sound like a master spy in a John le Carré novel, to Tunku Varadarajan's epic ad hominem bloviation in *The Daily Beast*: "With his bloodless, sallow face, his lank hair drained of all color, his languorous, very un-Australian limbs, and his aura of blinding pallor that appears to admit no nuance, Assange looks every inch the amoral, uber-nerd villain."

Some have called for putting Assange "out of business" (even if we must violate international law to do it), while others, ranging from Daniel Ellsberg to Assange himself, think he is (in Ellsberg's words) "in some danger." I don't doubt that Assange is in danger, but even if he is put out of business by arrest, assassination or character impeachment with charges of sexual misconduct, it would not stanch the flow of secret documents into the public domain. To think otherwise is an error that reflects a colossal misunderstanding of the nature of WikiLeaks and the subculture from which it emerged.

WikiLeaks is not the one-off creation of a solitary genius; it is the product of decades of collaborative work by people engaged in applying computer hacking to political causes, in particular, to the principle that information-hoarding is evil—and, as Stewart Brand said in 1984, "Information wants to be free." Today there is a broad spectrum of people engaged in this cause, so that were Assange to be eliminated today, WikiLeaks would doubtless continue, and even if WikiLeaks were somehow to be eliminated, new sites would emerge to replace it.

Let's begin by considering whether it is possible to take WikiLeaks offline, as called for in the *Washington Post* by former Bush speechwriter Marc Thiessen, who added that "taking [Assange] off the streets is not enough; we must also recover the documents he unlawfully possesses and disable the system he has built to illegally disseminate classified information."

Consider the demand that we "recover the documents." Even the documents that have not been made public by WikiLeaks are widely distributed all over the Internet. WikiLeaks has released an encrypted 1.4 gigabyte file called "insurance.aes256." If something happens to Assange, the password to the encrypted file will be released (presumably via a single Twitter tweet). What's in the file? We don't know, but at 1.4 gigabytes, it is nineteen times the size of the Afghan war log that was recently distributed to major newspapers. Legendary hacker Kevin Poulsen speculates that the file "is doubtless in the hands of thousands, if not tens of thousands, of netizens already."

It's also a bit difficult to "disable the system," since WikiLeaks did not need to create a new network; the group simply relied on existing electronic communications networks (e.g., the Internet) and the fact that there are tens of thousands of like-minded people all over the world. Where did all those like-minded people come from? Are they all under the spell of Assange? To the contrary, they were active long before Assange sat down to hack his first computer.

It has long been an ethical principle of hackers that ideas and information are not to be hoarded but are to be shared. In 1984, when Assange turned 13, Steven Levy described this attitude in his book *Hackers*. After interviewing a number of hackers, he distilled a "hacker ethic," which included, among others, the following two maxims: (1) all information should be free; (2) mistrust authority and promote decentralization.

These sentiments were poetically expressed by a hacker named The Mentor, in an essay titled "The Conscience of a Hacker." It was written shortly after his arrest, and appeared in the important hacker publication *Phrack* in 1986.

> We explore…and you call us criminals. We seek after knowledge…and you call us criminals. We exist without skin color, without nationality, without religious bias…and you call us criminals. You build atomic bombs, you wage wars, you murder, cheat, and lie to us and try to make us believe it's for our own good, yet we're the criminals. Yes, I am a criminal. My crime is that of curiosity. My crime is that of judging people by what they say and think, not what they look like. My crime is that of outsmarting you, something that you will never forgive me for. I am a hacker, and this is my manifesto. You may stop this individual, but you can't stop us all.

Indeed, you can't stop them all. One year after The Mentor's manifesto was published, Assange acquired a modem and entered cyberspace for the first time. In the quarter-century since, that basic hacker philosophy has not been abandoned,

Peter Ludlow, a professor of philosophy at Northwestern University, is the editor of Crypto Anarchy, Cyberstates, and Pirate Utopias.

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and indeed has evolved into a broad cultural movement. Hacker conferences with thousands of attendees have sprung up in places ranging from Amsterdam and New York to Las Vegas and Abu Dhabi, and small weekly hacker meetups are routine in every major city in the world.

For many hackers, this activity has taken a decidedly political turn—into what is sometimes called hacktivism. Hacktivism is the application of information technologies (and the hacking of them) to political action. This has ranged from simple website defacings and attempts to unbottle secret information to efforts to ensure the privacy of ordinary citizens by providing them military-grade encryption (a successful mission of the infamous Cypherpunks).

Hacktivism has been extended to political action against all manner of power structures. One of the earliest examples is the Hong Kong Blondes—a group that disrupted computer networks in China in the 1990s so people could get access to blocked websites. The Hong Kong Blondes were in turn assisted by a Texas-based hacker group called the Cult of the Dead Cow (cDc), which helped them with advanced encryption technology. In 2006 the cDc subsequently waged a PR campaign against Google (calling it Goolag) when Google caved in to Chinese censorship demands. Their slogan: "Goolag: Exporting censorship, one search at a time."

Examples of hacktivism by other groups have included denizens of the rowdy, transgressive and scatological 4Chan website, operating under the name Anonymous, in its assault on attempted censorship by the Church of Scientology, using a series of denial-of-service attacks against Scientology websites. Anonymous also moved against the Iranian government during the 2009 elections, when it established a website that shared information from inside Iran and provided advice to Iranian activists on how to encrypt and safely transmit communications. Another notable example is a group of Portuguese hackers called Urban Ka0s, which protested the Indonesian government's treatment of East Timor by hacking Indonesian government websites in the 1990s and posting alternative pages that protested the government's policies.

The political compass of these hacktivist groups has never pointed true right or true left—at least by our typical way of charting the political landscape. They have been consistently unified in their adherence to the basic hacker principles as outlined by Levy and The Mentor in the 1980s: information should not be hoarded by powerful constituencies—it needs to be placed in the hands of the general public. This principle is followed even to the point of threatening to become a "foolish consistency"—as in the recent document dump from WikiLeaks, which drew the rebuke of five human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, because, they felt, civilian sources were not adequately protected.

As described in Khatchadourian's *New Yorker* profile, Assange's philosophy blends in seamlessly with the hacktivist tradition: it can't be characterized in terms of left versus right so much as individual versus institution. In particular, Assange holds that truth, creativity, etc. are corrupted by institutional hierarchies, or what he calls "patronage networks," and that much of illegitimate power is perpetuated by the hoarding of information.

Meanwhile, in a profile of Army Pvt. Bradley Manning, the man accused of leaking documents to WikiLeaks, the *New York Times* considered many explanations for what Manning did. He was troubled because "classmates made fun of him for being gay"; he was "ignored" by his superiors; he was "self-medicating." Curiously elided was what Manning actually said his motivation was. In a May 25 conversation, the hacker Adrian Lamo asked Manning why he gave the information to WikiLeaks when he could have sold it to Russia or China and "made bank." Manning replied in true hacktivist fashion, "Because it's public data…it belongs in the public domain…information should be free… if it's out in the open…it should [do the] public good."

The traditional media, governments and their security organizations just cannot get unglued from the idea that there must be a single mastermind behind an operation like WikiLeaks. While this model works great in fictional dramas, it does not track what is really happening. This is not a one-man or even one-group operation. It is a network of thousands motivated by a shared hacktivist culture and ethic. And with or without Assange, it is not going away. ■

Letters

(continued from page 2)

has spawned has prevailed with no discernible positive effect for the students it proposed to help. As Diane Ravitch accurately points out in her article ["Why I Changed My Mind," June 14], the rise in accountability through high-stakes testing has resulted in a "measure and punish" approach that radically narrows the curriculum, affecting students and teachers alike. Now with even fewer resources at our disposal, we are at last being asked to reignite the imaginations of a generation of educators to engage, inspire and educate our youth. The challenges of creating a bridge to brighter landscapes are welcome, but the designated pathways are full of pot holes.

A positive offered by Race to the Top and the new focus on creativity and research is the opportunity to share successful practice. In Alameda County we are proud of our ability to put in place some of the exciting models of excellence mentioned by Pedro Noguera: schools as service centers; partnerships with higher education and business as pathways to college and careers; and comprehensive curriculums that include arts and civic engagement.

Sheila Jordan
Alameda County superintendent of schools

Do Do That Voodoo That You Do So Well

Baltimore

In 1980, when Bush the elder referred to Reagan's "trickle-down" theory as "voodoo economics," he was making the legitimate point that the theory was nonsense. But Voodoo (or Voudon) is no more nonsense than Christianity, Buddhism or Zoroastrianism. It is the name of a syncretic religion with African animist and Catholic roots, practiced by some Haitians. It's disrespectful to use the term [Jordan Stancil, "Europe's Voodoo Economics," June 28].

Ed Morman

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Books & the Arts.

A Wink and a Con

by CHARLES TAYLOR

William Lindsay Gresham's *Nightmare Alley* (1946) begins in the world of carnival sideshows and, inevitably, ends there. But along the way, the focus shifts from suckers on the midway to high-society marks ready to part with their moolah in order to advance—pardon the expression—the science of spiritualism. The con is essentially the same, but the pigeons get fatter.

When Gresham wrote *Nightmare Alley*, the first of five books he'd publish before his suicide in 1962 at the age of 53, the social barriers between the sawdusted depths of the sideshow and the rarefied air of the moneyed classes were still in place. Reading the novel now, when the gap between rich and poor is nearly as wide as it has ever been in this country, you're struck by how many other barriers have collapsed. Put it this way: the week I was reading *Nightmare Alley* was also the first time I watched an entire episode of *American Idol*. The show made the crowds in Gresham's novel who pay to see a geek bite the head off a live chicken seem almost wholesome.

The down-and-out dipsos carny managers sucker into working as geeks for the promise of a bottle and a better job are people caught at their most helpless. The contestants on *American Idol*, ready to make themselves over into a commodity, imitating arena-scale rock-star solos and gestures that had no sincerity or spontaneity to begin with, listening avidly to the advice of that slick packager Simon Cowell ("talent scout" is too dignified an appellation), are there by choice. So are the third-rate celebrities on *Dancing With the Stars* (some of them known from previous appearances on reality TV) and the ones even lower down the scale on *Celebrity Fit Club* or *Celebrity Rehab With Dr. Drew*. Then there are the ones like Kirstie Alley or the Kardashians or Flavor Flav, whose weight gain or collective cup size or horndogging ways rate them their very own big top. In our era of multi-tasking and reinvention, these celebrities are both the carny barker and the main attraction. How long until a bevy of cocktail waitresses and car-show models are invited on VH1 for the chance to appear on a reality show called *Tiger Woods' Hole in One*? What constitutes a freak when nearly the entire culture has become a freak show?

William Lindsay Gresham

You don't have to be a cultural conservative or a scold to acknowledge the tabloidization of society that has arisen from the eradication of the lines that once separated journalism, gossip and publicity. Ours is not the first era in which people are famous for being famous. In George Cukor's gentle satire *It Should Happen to You* (1954), a nobody, played by Judy Holliday, becomes a celebrity when her name winds up on billboards all over New York City. But our era is, perhaps, the first in which the potential for self-destruction has been a catalyst for gaining fame. When the entertainer Oscar Levant made his famous appearances on *The Jack Paar Show* in the early 1960s, his jokes about his own institutionalization were nervous-making. But Levant was there because of his wit and quickness and incredible talent for repartee—one of his better wisecracks was "There's a fine line between genius and insanity. I have erased this line." It was not because Paar was hoping his guest would melt into a hot mess and generate big ratings.

None of this is to say that *Nightmare Alley* stirs up nostalgia for the world it depicts. The novel is not charming or welcoming. European movies, from *8½* to Jacques Rivette's latest, *Around a Small Mountain*, have a tradition of using the tawdriness of circuses and carnivals as an affectionate metaphor for creation and what Inspector Clouseau called "life's rich pageant." And then there's the condescending tradition of arty slumming epitomized by the work of Diane Arbus. There's nothing of the tourist, either poetic or disdainful, in William Lindsay Gresham. He has more in common with Weegee, the photographer who hit the gutters of New York and caught the most appalling subjects, from fresh corpses to drunken midgets dressed like St. Patrick's Day leprechauns, in

Nightmare Alley
By William Lindsay Gresham.
Introduction by Nick Tosches.
New York Review Books.
275 pp. Paper $14.95.

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a glaring, pitiless light. *Nightmare Alley* shares with Weegee a fascination with the sordid and also a simultaneous commitment to realism and a compulsion to twist reality into swirling, distorted grotesquerie. This isn't to be confused with the sweat and press of the crowds found in the novels of John Dos Passos or the canvases of Reginald Marsh. The marriage of sensibilities that best conveys Gresham's flavor is the blunt, pulpy cruelty of Jim Thompson seen through the eyes of David Lynch. Gresham is a surrealist muckraker, though the dirt he's uncovering is less in the carny racket than in the soul of his protagonist, Stan Carlisle.

Three years before *Nightmare Alley* was published, Gene Kelly, in *DuBarry Was a Lady*, proclaimed himself a rising young man. Stan Carlisle is a rising young leech. Or maybe a termite. *Nightmare Alley* is about how Stan eats his way through the social barriers, still in place in the 1940s, aided by the willingness to be conned that cuts through the American class strata. Gresham takes us from choked midways, so vividly depicted you can smell the crowds, to wood-paneled mansions existing in a sort of mothballed respectability, so little disturbed by their human inhabitants you're prepared to believe that there are more spirits in the house than the ones Stan concocts to con his rich patrons.

The narrative describes the arc of Stan's career, except that he winds up much lower than he started. A poisonous version of the all-American hustler, Stan is, from the moment Gresham introduces him, predatory and yet—and perhaps this is the true mark of the predator—aloof. He approaches every human, from the carnival patrons to the women he beds, with an eye toward advancing himself. A carny trying to learn every trick he can, Stan both sucks up and bides his time, waiting for the right moment to cash in on the cons he's mastered, the secrets he's squirreled away.

Gresham opens the book by landing a muffled haymaker right on the reader's chin. Stan is assisting in the geek act when the carnival owner, who's running the demonstration, announces that it's feeding time. Gresham describes what Stan sees after the live chicken is tossed into the pen: "For the first time the paint-smeared face of the geek showed some life. His bloodshot eyes were nearly closed. Stan saw his lips shape words without sound. The words were, 'You son of a bitch.'" That's the geek's realization of what he's meant to do: become a participant in his own dehumanization. Yet instead of lingering on the grisly details, Gresham pulls the focus back, describing what follows obliquely, through a drunk's mindless yells of encouragement ("Get 'at ole shicken, boy!") and a woman's scream. But there's something almost worse coming. Stan asks the carnival owner how you find a geek. "You don't find 'em. You *make* 'em," he says, and goes on to describe the deliberate sadism of promising a rummy his bottle and then threatening to take it away. Here's Gresham's kicker: "The crowd was coming out of the geek show, gray and listless and silent except for the drunk. Stan watched them with a strange, sweet, faraway smile on his face. It was the smile of a prisoner who had found a file in a pie." Stan has taken a compressed master class in manipulation and likes what he sees.

Nightmare Alley contrasts Stan's unerring instinct for human weakness and his willingness to exploit it with others' protective awareness of those same flaws. In the novel's early sections, Stan is sleeping with Zeena, the carnival's good-hearted fortune-teller and the wife of Pete, who is also the brains behind her act. Pete's ingenuity had him and Zeena headlining vaudeville before his boozing brought them low. But Zeena remains emotionally faithful to her husband. When Stan asks her what's going to happen to Pete, she says,

> Nothing's going to happen to him. He is a sweet man, down deep. Long as he lasts I'll stick to him. If it hadn't been for Pete I'd of probably ended up in a crib house. Now I got a nice trade that'll always be in demand as long as there's a soul in the world worried about where next month's rent is coming from. I can always get along. And take Pete right along with me.

It's exactly such tough good-heartedness that Joan Blondell captures as Zeena in the 1947 film version of *Nightmare Alley*. Zeena's con is harmless: she pretends to divine what questions her audience has written out for her to answer, and then gives them responses so general they can fit nearly everyone's circumstance. What Stan wants from her isn't just an occasional bed mate but the code Pete worked out that will allow for showier displays of "mentalism."

The film, directed by Edmund Goulding from a script by Jules Furthman, is mostly faithful to the novel, and nowhere more so than in the opening carnival scenes. The frame is always crowded, with Tyrone Power's Stan seemingly pressed in by the crush of the people and the tents and trucks of the circus. Stan is a man straining to get out. Power had to lobby for the role (he's superb in it), and he plays moviegoers the way Stan will play his crowds when he leaves the circus behind to work as a mentalist and then spiritualist to high society. Even today, nobody goes to the movies expecting to see a leading man willingly turn himself into a bastard. Imagine, then, the postwar audience, primed to swoon over the handsome and charming Power, beginning to feel as if they have been swindled. (They might even feel revenge: by the final scenes, Power, sunken-eyed, looks like a prototype of one of George Romero's zombies.) Power comes up with one bit of business that captures Stan's essence: he manages always to look away from anyone declaring any tenderness for him. His gaze is always fixed on where he's going. And so, when he sets his sights on Molly, the sweet young girl taken in by the circus after her father's death, it's clear she's on her way to becoming his next steppingstone.

In subject and outlook, *Nightmare Alley* belongs to the American hard-boiled school, sometimes, not often, repeating its tough-guy clichés and misogyny. Yet the traces of the crime novel, and even of the social novel of the 1930s—the precursor

Midst

We're all saying the same thing now,

scolding the same shadow,

not in harmony,
but in sync

or by turns.

Singing that bar
about the flock
taking off

"as if"
it were one body—

as if this was one body—

and who could be listening?

RAE ARMANTROUT

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of hard-boiled writing, and most evident here in the condescension with which Stan is treated by some of his society patrons—aren't as strong as Gresham's particularized vision. This is the book of a man contemplating a funhouse hell, and it leaves the impression that he knows it intimately because one of his own legs has already, somewhere along the line, slipped into the abyss.

Nick Tosches's introduction to this new edition of the novel relates some of Gresham's philosophical wanderings: from Loyalist fighter during the Spanish Civil War to psychoanalysis to the Tarot. The biography supplied by the publisher relates the journey from there on: Christianity, AA, Buddhism. Yet for someone who worked so hard to find a system of belief, Gresham comes across in *Nightmare Alley* as deeply suspicious of everything except the dim possibility of human decency (personified by the humanity of Zeena, who can take care of herself, and Molly, who can't) and the near certainty of bad luck. Each of the twenty-two chapters of the novel corresponds to a Tarot card, and it's no accident that the final chapter is "The Hanged Man." Stan is the book's ultimate sucker, falling for fate's cosmic bait.

We're never in doubt that Stan is headed for a bad end. The Tarot cards at the beginning of each chapter tell you his future has been decided. Gresham relies on the suspense of just what will bring Stan down, how this lowlife will finally give himself away in classy company. Gresham also deploys a wicked version of the "country mouse and city mouse" gag, with Stan as the small-timer running into a major operator with whom he can't compete. That's Lilith Ritter, the psychologist who uses her patient files as a grifter's crib notes, allowing Stan to hook Ezra Grindle, the industrialist whose tragic and mourned boyhood romance makes him ripe for Stan's plucking.

In *Nightmare Alley* the intractable social barriers of a vanished American past are what make it so dicey for Stan to muck around in the reaches of society his scams take him to. In an early scene, when he and Molly do their mentalist bit at a swanky dinner party, the lady of the house has a servant bring him a note that says, "Kindly do not mingle with the guests." That's the warning that hangs, metaphorically, over the entire story.

Nightmare Alley would not have the power it does if it were set in a more fluid society like ours, where the crass and maybe even the criminal are a ticket to notoriety, where the freak shows have the money and clout of the network divisions of enormous corporations behind them. There isn't a small-town sheriff, like the one who hassles the carny folks here, who is going to try to shut down Viacom because someone complained about VH1's *I Love New York*.

Though not particularly relevant to the plot, an episode in a suburban rail station at night epitomizes, better than anything else in the novel, Gresham's violation of the normal by the grotesque.

> The train to New York was not due for half an hour and Mrs. Oakes, who had been visiting her daughter-in-law, had read the time table all wrong; now she would have to wait.
>
> On the station platform she walked up and down to relieve her impatience. Then, on a bench, she saw a little figure stretched out, its head pillowed on its arms. Her heart was touched. She shook him gently by the shoulder. "What's the matter, little man? Are you lost? Were you supposed to meet mamma or papa here at the station?"
>
> The sleeper sat up with a snarl. He was the size of a child; but was dressed in a striped suit and a pink shirt with a miniature necktie. And under his button nose was a mustache!
>
> The mustachioed baby pulled a cigarette from his pocket and raked a kitchen match on the seat of his trousers. He lit the cigarette and was about to snap away the match when he grinned up at her from his evil, old baby face, thrust one hand into his coat and drew out a postcard, holding the match so she could see it.
>
> Mrs. Oakes thought she would have a stroke. She tried to run away, but she couldn't. Then the train came and the horrible little creature swung aboard, winking at her.

It's the wink that's the real threat of the novel, the thing that repels us and attracts us, just as the midway crowds can't resist peeking at the worst the carny has to offer. Goulding's film of *Nightmare Alley*, good as it is, loses its vitality once it leaves the carnival. Gresham's novel is so compelling it makes us queasy. But no matter how rarefied (or stultified) the air we breathe in it, Gresham makes sure that the smell of sawdust and sweat and greasepaint and peanuts roasting too long fills our nostrils, and that things we can't smell, like desperation and cunning and a desperate, almost pathetic need to believe, are in the

KEIR GILCHRIST
EMMA ROBERTS
and ZACH GALIFIANAKIS
IT'S KIND OF A FUNNY STORY
Sometimes what's in your head isn't as crazy as you think.
FOCUS ON 2010
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You are invited to enter for a chance to join us on Wednesday, October 6th as we celebrate the release of the highly anticipated and acclaimed new film IT'S KIND OF A FUNNY STORY at an exclusive Washington, DC screening.
To enter to attend this VIP event, email your full name, mailing address, telephone number and date of birth to Contest@thenation.com on or before October 5th.
REGULAR ENGAGEMENTS START FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8TH
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front of our minds as well. Gresham isn't such a cynic that he precludes the possibility of compassion or kindness; Zeena and the naïve, trusting Molly are given endings that good people deserve and rarely get. But what makes the book truly nightmarish is its vision of gullibility and unscrupulousness as dance partners locked in a sadomasochistic two-step. Whoever you are, you can always depend on the cruelty of strangers. ■

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Sioux County, Nebraska

Unsettled

by CHARLES PETERSEN

As Frederick Jackson Turner wrote, and countless Hollywood westerns have confirmed, the frontier always repeats the same story. "It begins with the Indian and the hunter; it goes on to tell of the disintegration of savagery by the entrance of the trader…we read the annals of the pastoral stage in ranch life; the exploitation of the soil by…sparsely settled farming communities; the intensive culture of the denser farm settlement; and finally the…city and factory system." Little of the West has lived up to this plot—farms remain scarce in Nevada and Utah, cities and factories are few and far between—but we forgive it. And why not? So much of the region is desert, and we want to flatter ourselves for protecting all those mountain ranges and forests.

Of the Great Plains we expected better, and the Plains failed us. This is a fact we prefer to forget. No less perceptive a reader of nineteenth-century American history than Marilynne Robinson has called the Homestead Act, passed in 1862, "all in all the most poetical piece of legislation since Deuteronomy." Today the basic rhythms of this poetry remain familiar: the yeoman farmers "staking out" (literally with stakes) 160-acre plots of land, free for the taking to anyone willing to stay for five years and "prove up" on a claim; the inevitable conflicts between the newly arrived "fence builders" and the old "open range" cattle barons. But given how the Homestead Act worked in practice, with only a third of settlers gaining title to their claims, and most of these "stickers" driven off by drought within a generation, a better analogy might be the book of Exodus.

Willa Cather, the Plains' best-known novelist, chronicled the region's settling, which she lived through. She largely ignored its unsettling, even though homesteaders began quitting the Plains well before she started writing in the early 1900s, and continued to clear out during her most productive years, the 1910s and 1920s. According to a recent report from the Census Bureau, almost 60 percent "of Great Plains counties reached their maximum population before 1950, with most of those peaking between 1900 and 1920." A few counties reached their peak population not in 1930, as anyone familiar with the Dust Bowl might expect, but in 1890. The reason: too little rain falls on most of the Plains to permit unirrigated agriculture. Homesteaders learned this the hard way, and many of them hit the road to try their luck in yet another promised land, California. Those who remained, especially on the groundwater-scarce northern Plains, bought up the land, tore down the fences and tried to piece together ranches large enough to run cattle.

Many writers and artists have focused on the Dust Bowl, but few have attended to this more gradual ebbing of people away from the Plains. The past fifty years of "revisionist" westerns, for example, rarely question the basic premise of the genre—that the cowboys were driven off the Plains by the arrival of "civilization" in the form of the homesteaders. If anything, by choosing so many desert and mountain settings for their stories and films, Clint Eastwood, Sam Peckinpah, Cormac McCarthy and Annie Proulx have made the Plains, the place where the cowboy myth originated, appear less western than ever.

As for the two nonfiction bestsellers about the Plains from the past two decades, Ian Frazier's *Great Plains* (1989) and Timothy Egan's *The Worst Hard Time* (2006), neither dwells on the long-term failures of the Homestead Act. Frazier focuses on the region's distant past and sparsely populated present; Egan examines the Dust Bowl, a disaster that, as he correctly emphasizes, drove off a surprisingly small number of homesteaders. Unlike a series of less well-known but far more perceptive books, including Wallace Stegner's *Wolf Willow* (1955), Donald Worster's *Dust Bowl* (1979) and Jonathan Raban's *Bad Land* (1996), Frazier and Egan pay little attention to the decades when the Plains was unsettled.

The Plains often seems like an orphan region, lost between the West and the Midwest. It is "the land that time forgot," but the problems of the Plains—population loss, drug addiction, environmental degradation, unsustainable use of resources—are as pressing as those facing any other part of the country. Like the region's orphan status, they are further evidence of neglect. But if the region's history continues to be disregarded, it's likely that attempts to restore the life and the land of the Plains will find the "sea of grass" as restless and unforgiving as did the early homesteaders.

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The term "Great Plains" typically refers to the region encompassing the shortgrass prairies of western Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas; eastern Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico; and the panhandles of Texas and Oklahoma. But ecologically there's no particularly strong reason to exclude the rest of the Midwest, and one would be hard-pressed to name two landscapes more closely related than the grasslands of Iowa and South Dakota. Farther west, the tallgrass of the prairie becomes the shortgrass of the Plains; the big bluestem of Iowa shrinks to the little bluestem of South Dakota. Michael Forsberg's recent collection of photos, *Great Plains: America's Lingering Wild*, which includes essays by various writers, argues for an even more expansive ecological view of the region, widening the boundaries to include much of Minnesota, Iowa and Missouri, and even parts of Illinois and Indiana.

Where Forsberg looks to plant life to link the Plains with the rest of the Midwest, Nick Reding's *Methland* and Patrick Carr and Maria Kefalas's *Hollowing Out the Middle* look to people—exchanging the unifying ecological concept of the prairie for the unifying sociological concept of the Heartland. Carr and Kefalas explain that they chose a single town in Iowa for their research "because it is typical of the many towns that are finding it difficult to survive, and its travails could be those of any of the thousands of depopulating rural communities stretching from western Pennsylvania to the Texas Panhandle." Reding also treats one Iowa small town as a case study, and while he, Carr and Kefalas acknowledge the dangers of extrapolating from such small samples, they attempt, through careful observation, to demonstrate that the recent "rural crisis" is no less perilous than the better known "urban crisis" of the past fifty years. The abandoned barns of the countryside, often celebrated as picturesque, are the mirror images of the burned-out factories and apartment blocks of Newark, the Bronx and Detroit; and methamphetamine addiction and production, which became widespread throughout small-town America in the 1980s and 1990s, is as catastrophic as the urban crack epidemic. An emphasis on decades of neglect, combined with detailed stories from struggling Iowa towns, make *Methland* and *Hollowing Out* powerful works of sociology and reportage.

Yet by applying their claims to the entire Midwest, and assuming that the Plains should be included in the region, *Great Plains*, *Methland* and *Hollowing Out the Middle* recapitulate, for very different reasons, some of the worst misconceptions of the past. Forsberg hopes that the close relation of flora on the western Plains to that on the eastern prairie will persuade people to protect both places as a single region. This same similarity led homesteaders, a hundred years ago, to believe they could farm the Plains much as they had the prairies: they would simply downsize, following the cue of the native grasses, and plant three-foot wheat instead of six-foot corn. Reding, driving the back roads of the prairie, sees a uniting feature in place names: "The very idea that tiny Plains towns from Iowa to Montana are given names like Harvey and Melvin and Maurice, Dana and Bode and Britt—first names, familiar names—underscores [their] utter humanity." Like Forsberg, Reding hopes the similarity of place names will persuade readers that all of these towns, stretching from Iowa to Montana, are similarly worth saving. It was these same familiar, stolid names that first led farmers to believe they could leave the eastern prairie—or Eastern Europe, as the case may be—for an equally or even more humane life on the Plains.

The reality was quite different: all the analogies broke down. Wheat was far less suited to the Plains than corn was to the prairies; familiar place names were typically not welcome mats left by early settlers but bait scattered by the marketing departments of railroad companies. Forsberg, unlike Reding, Carr and Kefalas, is at least conscious of this past, although he too doesn't give much consideration to how the very different histories of the Plains and the prairie might hamper attempts to reconcile the two ecosystems and protect them as one.

The problems that arise from treating the Plains and the prairie as a single region are evident enough in the conflicting lessons these books draw from the disappearance of small towns. On the page facing the introduction to Forsberg's *Great Plains* is a classic piece of Americana: a photograph of the Scandia Lutheran Church, standing tall and proud in the grass of eastern Montana. What the caption neglects to mention is that this church is as empty as much of the land surrounding it, the first stop on the tour of a buffalo reserve (though not inside the reserve itself). Once a year, as preparation for a commemorative service, the church is tidied up by a congregation from nearby Malta (a name chosen by a railroad official who spun a globe until his finger rested midway through the Mediterranean); otherwise, the building sits abandoned. Nevertheless, the church, along with the flourishing flora, is an image of hope for Forsberg, proof of the resilience of nature, of the ability of the grasslands to recover from the hardscrabble farming of arid land. For defenders of rural America like Reding, Carr and Kefalas, such rewilding is an image of disaster—evidence of what they call the environmentalists' "nihilistic assessment of the future of small towns" (Carr and Kefalas), the first signs of their plan to "clear out the towns of the Plains…put the land into a national park and reintroduce the buffalo" (Reding).

What the conflict foregrounds, though, are the very different prospects for the western Plains and the eastern prairies. As Forsberg argues throughout *Great Plains*, there are good reasons to be hopeful about

In This Essay

Great Plains
America's Lingering Wild.
By Michael Forsberg.
Chicago. 260 pp. $45.

Methland
The Death and Life of an American Small Town.
By Nick Reding.
Bloomsbury. 269 pp. Paper $15.

Hollowing Out the Middle
The Rural Brain Drain and What It Means for America.
By Patrick Carr and Maria Kefalas.
Beacon. 239 pp. Paper $16.

Wolf Willow
A History, a Story, and a Memory of the Last Plains Frontier.
By Wallace Stegner.
Penguin. 306 pp. Paper $16.

The Masterworks of Charles M. Russell
Edited by Joan Carpenter Troccoli.
Oklahoma. 269 pp. $65.

The Wide Open
Prose, Poetry, and Photographs of the Prairie.
Edited by Annick Smith and Susan O'Connor.
Nebraska. 200 pp. $39.95.

Rewilding the West
Restoration in a Praire Landscape.
By Richard Manning
California. 230 pp. $24.95.

Ecology & Economics of the Great Plains
By Daniel Licht.
Nebraska. 225 pp. $29.95.

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conservation in Nebraska and the Dakotas and Montana, where much land remains unfarmed and close to a wild state; as Reding, Carr and Kefalas show, there are also good reasons to be hopeful about the small towns of Iowa, which still have some of the best public schools in the country. But there's almost no chance of significant conservation on the hugely productive farmland where the tallgrass once stood, just as there's almost no chance to save most of the small towns of the western Plains. The small towns of Iowa have suffered from population loss for the past few decades. On the Great Plains, population loss has been a fact of life for a century; today, the population density of most rural counties in the Plains satisfies the criterion—less than two people per square mile—used by the Census Bureau in the nineteenth century to define "unsettled territory," otherwise known as wilderness.

On the Great Plains, population loss has been a fact of life for a century.

One of the more candid moments in *Great Plains* is in an essay by Forsberg's primary collaborator, Dan O'Brien, who recounts a speech he delivered in suburban St. Paul to mark the reintroduction of a few buffalo to a patch of prairie. O'Brien was impressed less by the new buffalo preserve—it "amounted to a clearing," he says dismissively—than by the audience. "The economic and philanthropic power that spread out before the stage was immense. Here, in this land that is often written off in terms of conservation potential, was real strength." Strength not for conservation in Minnesota, since the reserve O'Brien was speaking at may as well have been a zoo, but for areas farther west, where that wealth might be put to better use. The continuing interest in eastern prairie restoration—from John Madson's classic *Where the Sky Began* (1982) to Cornelia Mutel's *The Emerald Horizon* (2008)—is thus for O'Brien and Forsberg a covert opportunity to emphasize ecological similarities that might lead suburbanites to protect the Plains, even if they can't do much to reclaim their own grasslands.

Hollowing Out and *Methland* barely acknowledge the different outlooks for the Plains and the prairie. Carr and Kefalas approvingly cite one demographer on the Heartland as a whole: "If there is an idealized type of the agrarian and small-town image in America, it surely belongs to the Corn Belt and the Great Plains—the land of the Homestead Act, frugal, hard-working farmers….and even occasional strife, but without the degrading legacy of slavery, sharecropping, grinding poverty, and soil depletion that has overlaid the rural South." The obvious error here—that soil depletion hasn't afflicted the Plains, the home of the Dust Bowl—is characteristic of the reluctance to acknowledge the basic differences between the Plains, where little rain falls, and the prairie, where water-intensive crops like corn thrive. The soil depletion of the cotton-picking South can be attributed to a discredited way of life; to consider soil depletion an essential aspect of life on the Plains is to question the character of the homesteaders, one of the most idealized groups in American history.

The importance of this oversight becomes clear when *Methland* and *Hollowing Out* compare their Heartland towns to those traditionally thought of as dependent on scarce and easily depleted resources. According to Carr and Kefalas, many mining towns "have ceased to exist over the years as their fortunes have waned. But this time it is different." Similarly, Reding writes, "Historically, farming communities were models of rural economic health, and mining communities…were an indicator of a crippling system of centralization." But while farmers may once have been famously self-reliant, the homesteaders reached the Plains in the middle of the industrial age. As a result, there are thousands of ghost towns in Kansas alone, each a vacant reminder that on the Great Plains farming has more often than not been a matter of "mining the soil": first, remove the limited water and nutrients in the form of wheat; second, refine the yield into a purer form, grain, and export it through the centralized system of the railroads; and finally, once the claim (in this case under the Homestead Act rather than the Mining Law) has been played out, move on. The Dust Bowl was not an exception but only the most famous of the many exoduses from the Plains that followed the extraction and depletion of the rich vein of natural resources latent in the soil.

Wallace Stegner, born in Iowa and raised on the Plains, offers one of the more moving accounts of a "soil boom" in *Wolf Willow*:

> In spite of my mother's flimsy pretense that we were farmers of the kind her Iowa parents were, drawing our full sustenance from the soil and tending the soil as good husbandmen should.… It was not a farm, and we were not farmers, but wheat miners, and trapped ones at that.… It would never have occurred to her to think that her family and thousands of others had been betrayed by homestead laws totally inapplicable on the arid Plains.

The cycle of despoliation was repeated in different decades across the western grasslands and continues to this day, at least on the southern Plains, where farmers are mining the giant Ogallala aquifer to sustain a system of "climate-free agriculture." Starting in the 1930s, desperate homesteaders began using centrifugal pumps to draw water from the aquifer hundreds of feet below; the underground rain, as it has been called, is used to irrigate crops otherwise impossible to farm in the region, such as cotton, sugar beets, alfalfa, cantaloupes and, of course, corn. It's hard to know which resource will be exhausted first, the water in the aquifer or the oil required to pump it out, but either way it's no exaggeration to say that most of the small towns on the Great Plains never resembled the "models of rural economic health" that have begun to disappear from Iowa. When the underground rain slows to a drizzle and the current boom on the southern Plains ends, the landscape will likely become as desolate as that to the north; and Kansas, for reasons having more to do with environmental than rural health, will be the home of a few more ghost towns.

A century ago the shortgrass Plains was known as the West. Of course, a century before that Iowa was known as the West. And like Iowa, but unlike, say, Arizona or Nevada ("the New West"), the West of the Plains became "the West that has passed." This helpful phrase was coined by the cowboy artist Charlie Russell, who is being honored this year by the exhibition "The Masterworks of Charles M. Russell," which traveled to Denver, Tulsa and Houston. In his paintings and his remarks about them, Russell confirmed Frederick Jackson Turner's thesis: the Plains, he declared, was indeed slowly being overtaken by the Heartland. "It is largely a thing of the past now—gone as a result of the country filling up with people from the east. The big ranches have gone and the Indians and the buffalo have gone.… Some day the [rodeo] itself will be a thing of the past.… Then the only record of the wild, untamed life of

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the plains and prairies will be that written on canvas." Late in his career Russell even began painting exclusively in the tones of twilight, or "Russell light" as the exhibition catalog helpfully describes it, bringing to mind Thomas Kinkade, the West's other famous painter of light. But while the warm glow exuding from Kinkade's cottage windows gives "a lurid effect, as if the interior of the structure might be on fire," as Joan Didion once wrote, the effect of Russell light is nearly the opposite. Look at enough of these paintings and you begin to believe that, instead of burning to the ground, the West of the Plains faded to black.

Writers who consider the Plains part of the contemporary West are invariably polemical, as if they felt obliged to work up enough rhetorical sparks to illuminate the landscape again. Unlike so many writers about the West, they can't assume people will automatically find the Plains beautiful, no matter the attractions of Russell's old paintings. This polemical bent often makes these writers much more persuasive; it also, at times, makes their attraction to the harsh landscape seem perverse. Annick Smith and Susan O'Connor write in the introduction to *The Wide Open*, "It is hard to love the high, cold plains of the American West. They are huge and harsh and demanding.... Perhaps because they are hard to love, [the Plains] challenge the imaginative mind and the adventurous heart." Nothing could be more difficult to reconcile with the soft-focus image of the mountain West peddled by hiking guides, travel brochures and real estate agents that drone on about the "inspiring," "majestic" and "breathtaking" views, none of which they would dare call "hard to love."

Writers like Smith and O'Connor can occasionally sound as if they are from an earlier era, when much of the West was initially regarded as just as hard to love. Clarence Dutton, one of the first writers to describe the Grand Canyon in detail, said of the landscape in 1882, "The lover of nature, whose perceptions have been trained in the Alps, in Italy, Germany, or New England...would enter this strange region with a shock, and dwell there for a time with a sense of oppression, and perhaps with horror." In 1792 George Vancouver, sailing north of the city that now bears his name, on a route often traveled today by cruise ships, found the British Columbia coastline "as desolate [and] inhospitable a country as the most melancholy creature could be desirous of inhabiting." He did not mean this as a compliment. It took Romanticism to teach Europeans to love the "desolate" and "horrible" landscapes of the West; and for a time Romanticism even taught many to love the Plains, attracting Teddy Roosevelt, John Audubon, George Grinnell and an entire generation of East Coast urbanites.

The willingness to renew the imaginative demands of those first encounters is what makes the more recent books to consider the Plains part of the West so exciting. Dan Flores writes in his contribution to *The Wide Open*, "Nineteenth-century Great Plains paintings and word pictures... serve as a kind of time machine. They function, perhaps, in both directions in the flow of time." Not only do the works of nineteenth-century writers and artists show us how the Plains was once viewed, Flores suggests; they also show how we might yet learn to see the Plains again. Flores quotes the traveler and poet Albert Pike—"The sea, the woods, the mountains, all suffer in comparison with the prairie"—but a more famous example comes from Walt Whitman: "While I know the standard claim is that Yosemite, Niagara falls, the upper Yellowstone and the like, afford the greatest natural shows, I am not so sure but the Prairies and Plains, while less stunning at first sight, last longer, [and] fill the esthetic sense fuller."

The rhetoric is stirring, but the way these claims get translated into the twenty-first century is often unpersuasive. The Plains and the prairies can be connected directly, through the similarity of their plants, but the Plains is so different from other western environments that it can be likened to them only indirectly. Writers do so most often by asserting that, while superficially the landscapes may look very different, on the level of ecology the Plains is just as worthy of protection as the coast, the desert, the mountains. Or they claim that the Plains may be even more worthy of protection, as Richard Manning argues in another essay in *The Wide Open* and in his own book *Rewilding the West*:

> Worldwide, about 10 percent of all biomes enjoy some sort of protected status; temperate grasslands—of which the high plains are a shining example—are about 1 percent protected. It is an odd exclusion in that we now understand that the grassland plains are among the most productive biomes for wildlife, as the accounts of early explorers attest.

One sees similar claims in much of the conservation literature about the Plains. A recent report from the World Wildlife Fund refers to the Plains' "vast and diverse natural amenities"; Daniel Licht, in *Ecology and Economics of the Great Plains*, published in 1997 and recently reissued, calls the Plains "the most profound of all of North America's ecosystems." Flores accordingly concludes, in his essay for *The Wide Open*, that it is among the "supreme ironies of the modern West" that "in our time the Rockies is the fairyland, and the Great Plains is at best the forgotten quarter."

Within all of these attempts to reassert the ecological worth of the Plains, and thus the region's connection to the West, lies a deeper irony. The Plains, like every ecosystem, undoubtedly deserves protection. But the Plains isn't nearly so diverse as these writers claim. Take the best-known metaphor: the Plains as a "sea of grass." Ecologically, this phrase is surprisingly apt. The Plains may once have been "among the most productive biomes for wildlife," as Manning suggests, its vast buffalo herds rivaled only by the vast schools of fish in the ocean. But while unquestionably productive, the Plains, like the ocean, isn't particularly diverse. Licht, a less polemical writer, admits as much in *Ecology and Economics of the Great Plains*, emphasizing the Plains' bounty while admitting that the ecosystem is "not necessarily the richest...in number of species." Despite the Plains' evident productivity, the landscape simply can't measure up to the ecological richness of, for example, the rainforest of the Olympic Peninsula, the terrestrial equivalent of an ocean's center of biodiversity, the coral reefs.

Unquestionably productive, the Plains, like the ocean, isn't especially diverse.

The best reason for considering the Plains part of the West is not the landscape's richness but, at least by the standards of contemporary capitalism, its relative worthlessness. Manning describes the small expense of establishing a massive buffalo reserve with what sounds like glee: "By buying those fifty to one hundred ranches, land that sells for maybe $200 or $300 an acre, one leverages control of grazing on 3.5 million acres. That is, for about $250 million—the price of waging war in Iraq

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for ten days—we create a Yellowstone of the plains." Yellowstone itself was established according to similar calculations. Before setting aside the land as a national park, the nation's first, Congress dispatched a team of surveyors to the area to confirm it had no practical value. Yellowstone's pricelessness is the measure of its worthlessness, and that contradiction, more than anything else, may be what joins the contemporary Plains to the West. While land in much of the West has become expensive, and while instead of population loss many Western counties suffer from "rural sprawl," vast swaths of the region remain in public hands because, especially outside the national forests, most of the land has long been considered too worthless to own.

Whether the Plains is part of the Midwest or the West, our confusion about it has consequences. It means that earnest and important books like *Methland* and *Hollowing Out* extrapolate legitimate findings about small towns in rural Iowa to Plains communities with much older and more intractable problems. It also means that visionary books like *The Wide Open* and *Rewilding the West* make extraordinary claims that the Plains cannot support. Richard Manning, in his polemical desire to reclaim the Plains for the West, argues that "A sense of the history of the general folly of the West will steer you toward this particular place at the heart of the plains.... Any attempt to undo the damage, any attempt to rewrite western civilization's founding story, must begin in Phillips County, Montana." Manning's frustration with the general ignorance about the Plains leads him to place the Plains first at the heart of the American West and then, untenably, at the heart of Western civilization.

"Between that earth and that sky I felt erased, blotted out," writes Willa Cather in *My Antonia*. Similarly, for Reding, "Prairie is humbling." This may be the definitive Midwestern view of the Plains. The Western perspective on the Plains is the opposite. Wallace Stegner, in *Wolf Willow*, describes the land that destroyed his family's homesteading ambitions:

> The world is very large, the sky even larger, and you are very small. But also the world is flat, empty, nearly abstract, and in its flatness you are a challenging upright thing, as sudden as an exclamation mark, as enigmatic as a question mark.
>
> It is a country to breed mystical people, egocentric people, perhaps poetic people. But not humble ones. At noon the total sun pours on your single head; at sunrise or sunset you throw a shadow a hundred yards long. It was not prairie dwellers who invented the indifferent universe or impotent man. Puny you may feel there, and vulnerable, but not unnoticed. This is a land to mark the sparrow's fall.

It would diminish the Plains to judge one of these responses right, the other wrong. Whatever region the landscape may belong to, however profound its ecology or prosaic its appearance, there's no excuse for drawing blanks when we think about the Plains. The metaphor of the "sea of grass" again proves surprisingly apt: the Plains may be our most protean landscape. ■

A Matter of Memory

by NOAH ISENBERG

On a cool, drizzly autumn afternoon last November, German chancellor Angela Merkel walked across the Bornholmer Bridge flanked by former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev and former Polish opposition leader Lech Walesa. The Bornholmer was the first of several border checkpoints between East and West Berlin to have been burst open by throngs of East Germans on November 9, 1989. "This is not just a day of celebration for Germany," intoned Merkel, the first German head of state to hail from the former East after the so-called *Wende*, or "turning point." It is, she hastened to add, "a day of celebration for the whole of Europe." The large-scale festivities commemorating the fall of the Berlin Wall, which included the usual fanfare (Daniel Barenboim conducting the Berlin Staatskapelle orchestra at the Brandenburg Gate) and political platitudes ("We are Berliners," declared Nicolas Sarkozy, hoping to rekindle the spirit of JFK), captured the mood, or at least the official mood, even if the pains and aftershocks of unification continue to be felt and written about on both sides of the former border.

Without a trace of the infectious euphoria conveyed at the opening of the wall and the subsequent celebration of its collapse, or of the countervailing *Ostalgie*, the nostalgia for life in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), the German fiction writer Ingo Schulze has distinguished himself as an exceptionally sober-minded, unsentimental chronicler of postunification Germany. Born in Dresden in 1962, Schulze came of age in the GDR, where he studied classical philology and German literature at the University of Jena. Apart from a smattering of stories composed during his obligatory service in the East German military in the early 1980s, and a couple of poems written as a teenager, he didn't begin writing in earnest until after the wall had fallen.

JIM RAKETE

Ingo Schulze

One More Story
Thirteen Stories in the Time-Honored Mode.
By Ingo Schulze.
Translated by John Woods.
Knopf. 269 pp. $25.95.

His first book, *33 Augenblicke des Glücks* (33 Moments of Happiness), appeared in 1995. An irreverent collection of short stories set in post-Communist St. Petersburg, where Schulze had worked as a journalist in the early 1990s, it was immediately lauded by critics and showered with Germany's most prestigious literary awards, including the Alfred Döblin Prize, named after Weimar Berlin's premier literary Modernist. But it was Schulze's 1998 debut novel, *Simple Stories*, that brought him international fame and marked him as an exemplary voice of *Wende* literature (Günter Grass crowned him "our new epic storyteller"). In the twenty-nine discrete but thematically linked chapters that form *Simple Stories*—the German edition

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bore the evocative subtitle "Ein Roman aus der ostdeutschen Provinz" (A Novel from the East German Provinces)—Schulze offered a fictional account of the people of Altenburg, a small town south of Leipzig, where he had worked during the late 1980s and early '90s, as a dramaturge at the local theater and as an editor at the local paper. Owing to his spare prose style and unflinching eye for human drama, two formal attributes that have remained constant throughout his writing career, Schulze's work, in particular his debut novel, has begged comparison to Raymond Carver and Ernest Hemingway, influences the German author has readily admitted.

But Schulze's choice of adopting an American literary tradition—*Simple Stories* was largely written during an extended stay in New York City in the mid-'90s—to describe everyday life in postunification Altenburg isn't without its share of irony. In a chapter called "New Money," he tells a wrenching story, an allegory so it would seem, of East/West cultural collisions through the eyes of an Altenburg waitress named Connie Schubert. Connie falls for Harry Nelson, a slick West German salesman she fleetingly fantasizes about as her "future husband" and "father of [her] children" but who rapes her and skips town. Tales of love, loss and betrayal and of a seemingly chronic sense of disorientation in the face of a new system dominate Schulze's *oeuvre*. In 2005 he published a sprawling epic, *Neue Leben* (New Lives), another reunification novel of sorts, which recounts the life of its protagonist, Enrico Türmer (as told in letters gathered by a fictional editor named Ingo Schulze), from his youth in East Germany to his "new life" after unification, from his days as an unfulfilled writer to his ultimate transformation into a ruthless capitalist. Similarly, Schulze's latest novel, *Adam und Evelyn* (2008), a dark comedy whose departure point is the fateful swell of late summer 1989, when the border between Hungary and Austria began to crack, applies additional pressure to the competing allegiances, East and West, of the two title characters.

In between these two novels, in 2008, Schulze published a collection of stories called *Handy* (Cell Phone), which has now been expertly rendered in English by John Woods, Schulze's devoted and highly gifted translator, and released on these shores as *One More Story: Thirteen Stories in the Time-Honored Mode*. For American readers, Schulze's subtitle might call to mind Harold Brodkey's *Stories in an Almost Classical Mode*, but the original phrasing of Schulze's subtitle, "Dreizehn Geschichten in alter Manier" (literally, "Thirteen Stories in the Old-Fashioned Manner"), is much more basic and elemental, less fanciful and hardly grandiose. Indeed, as the stories amply demonstrate, Schulze prefers a kind of unvarnished and natural storytelling that, while not entirely without artifice, is rather understated. Schulze writes with great poise, maturity and confidence, but he is acutely aware of his formal limitations as well as his debts. All but two of the stories are told in the first person, and the degree of self-consciousness exhibited by the narrators is occasionally startling. As the first-person narrator in one story observes, "How lovely it would be if I could describe what comes next in the style of a Leskov or Turgenev."

The subject matter of *One More Story* ranges widely—from oblique philosophical reflections on fate and transcendence and a near-hallucinatory meditation on the beauty of an orange peel, to the more concrete, prosaic concerns of people sorting out their relationships or simply struggling to maintain them—yet Schulze's style remains centered on the essentials of storytelling. Indeed, his choice of epigraph, taken from the modern Austrian poet Friederike Mayröcker, betrays the age-old, never-ending project that finds expression in the book's succeeding pages: "Then one day followed the next without the basic questions of life ever being solved." Throughout the collection, Schulze repeatedly complicates the distinction between reality and fiction, with some of the stories speaking directly to this issue. For example, the first-person narrator of "Incident in Cairo" claims while preparing a lecture to have "found the hook to hang it on in the relationship of the words 'history/story' and *Geschichte/Geschichten*." The same narrator, who confesses to a habit of bringing pieces of the Berlin Wall, "the colorful ones" encased in Plexiglas and purchased at KaDeWe, as gifts for his foreign hosts, is made to field a string of familiar, presumably recurrent questions: "Why do you write? How autobiographical are your books? Are the East Germans being oppressed by the West Germans? Why are your characters unhappy?" Like that other widely celebrated German author of the late twentieth century, W.G. Sebald, yet without the same infusion of visual imagery or the ethereal language, Schulze tends to blur the two realms, sometimes beyond recognition. (A handful of these stories first appeared in German newspapers and magazines, one in the *Times Literary Supplement*, and the generic boundaries between reportage and the short story are frequently suspended.)

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For all its self-consciousness and the intricacy of its patterns, Schulze's writing is not particularly radical in its formal innovation: Schulze indulges in few literary acrobatics. If anything, the frequent blurring of history and fiction forms less of a link to the literary vanguard of the post–cold war West than to the time-honored Russian poets and storytellers, several of whom he mentions by name. One of the narrators in *One More Story*—yes, one who is rather easily mistaken for Schulze—bears a striking resemblance to Pushkin. The Russian-born neighbor in the story, after seeing a picture of the narrator in the local Dresden newspaper, insists on calling him "my Pushkin." Here, as elsewhere, the East German–born author straddles traditions of competing and complicating origins.

Among the finest pieces in the collection is "Estonia, Out in the Country," which relays in all its vivid, bizarre detail the experience of an author on a speaking junket in the Eastern European hinterland. Again the first-person narrator is difficult to distinguish from Schulze—he notes early in the text, "I had written thirty-three stories about St. Petersburg, so surely I could come up with one about Estonia"—but part of the strength of the story is that it forces the reader to imagine a writer like Schulze being brought to remote regions and expected to perform. The real conceit, however, is not so much the framework as the story told within it, which has an arch twist to it that merely amplifies the absurdity of the German writer thrust into the Estonian outback. After giving a perfunctory reading in the German department at the University of Tartu, and going for a round of beers with the students, the narrator and his female traveling companion embark on a journey to Käsmu, on the North Estonian coast, where the Writer's Union has offered them its guesthouse. There the two witness an event that seems almost to have been imported from a John Irving novel: a circus bear named Seryosha eludes a group of Finnish hunters by riding a woman's bicycle that he's swiped from an unsuspecting Estonian blueberry picker. As if it had all merely been conjured up in a hazy dream, "[he] fled into the forest, soon breaking into an easy trot on all fours, and vanished among the fir trees."

In an interview Schulze once said of Carver and Hemingway that their form lent itself to the subjects and time period he has chosen to approach in his work. "It had something to do," he asserted, "with the transition from a socialist and Soviet dependent culture, however defined, to a capitalist one. Almost overnight we found ourselves in the middle of an American world." References to American culture, often as a catchall for the West, abound in Schulze's fiction. As one narrator remarks while on a trip to Umbria in the spring of 1999, staying in an area from which NATO aircraft bound for the Balkans launched their missions: "Sometimes we watched CNN but avoided talking about the details. Reiner said that words like 'airbase,' 'air strikes,' and 'Serbs' already seemed more familiar, more appropriate to him than the German terms, which really just sounded like translations." Even though this collection is less overtly concerned with the East/West divide than some of Schulze's previous books, many of the stories still offer subtle commentary on the ongoing differences—habits, manners of speech, career choices and travel destinations—between *Ossis*, the characters whose origins lie in the GDR, and their *Wessi* counterparts. As hard as it may be to peg Schulze exclusively as a *Wende* author, it appears equally hard for him to turn away from that subject altogether.

While living in Berlin during the months leading up to the twentieth-anniversary celebration of German unification—as fate would have it, in an apartment located just a few blocks from the Bornholmer Bridge—I was often puzzled by how few reminders of the former border remain. Sure, there's a plaque here and there, a monument along the Bernauer Strasse in the form of a restored, sanitized stretch of the Berlin Wall, and the kitschy Disney-style museum of the Wall, the Mauermuseum at Checkpoint Charlie. It often felt to me, as Schulze has repeatedly intimated in his fiction, as though the past had been largely papered over. A German documentary that premiered in Berlin in 2008, *Heimatkunde* (Local History), follows its narrator, Martin Sonneborn, a former editor at the satirical magazine *Titanic*, as he treks along the old border, trying to gauge the level of cultural cross-fertilization (not so much) and residual animosity (plenty). One memorable scene has him sharing a sausage with a group of kids at a gas station and listening to the lingering grudges that the children of former *Ossis* harbor toward the West. The wall may no longer be there physically, Sonneborn suggests, but it's still lodged quite firmly in the mind. More than anything, then, it is now a matter of memory, which is why Schulze keeps returning in his fiction to a question he posed in his first novel: "Why am I telling this? Because a person forgets so quickly." ■

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ORGANIZATIONS

NATION DISCUSSION GROUP FORMING. Buffalo, NY, and suburbs. Contact Nicholas Read, (716) 838-1331.

SEATTLE *Nation* discussion group invites you to join us. E-mail billcnecessary@gmail.com.

NEW *NATION* ASSOCIATES DISCUSSION GROUP forming in Southwest Kansas (Hugoton). Contact: Jack Golding (620) 428-5647 or golding6231@yahoo.com.

HARTFORD DISCUSSION GROUP. Still meeting on the first Sunday of the month between 2 and 4 PM, but now meeting at The Hartford Quaker Meeting House, 144 South Quaker Lane, West Hartford (between Boulevard and Farmington Avenue).

ROCK HILL/FORT MILL, SC, *Nation* discussion group forming. Contact addgroup@comporium.net.

LANSING, MICH., *Nation* discussion group is looking for new members. We also would like to link up with any progressive discussion groups meeting in Michigan and assist anyone throughout the state seeking to establish a *Nation* discussion group. Contact: richardc@michcom.net or (517) 627-4591.

SAN FRANCISCO *Nation* discussion group. For information, e-mail evilhess@gmail.com.

NASHVILLE, TENN., *Nation* discussion group. Contact Howard Romaine. hromaine@gmail.com.

SAN ANTONIO *Nation* discussion group. Second Mondays, Grady's Bar-B-Q at San Pedro and Jackson Keller. Contact lenwheeler@satx.rr.com for more information.

ORGANIZATIONS

RICHMOND, VA, *Nation* discussion group is seeking new members. Contact Wayne Young, (804) 232-8521, youngwayne88838@aol.com.

ASHEVILLE, NC, *Nation* discussion group forming. Contact mgibney@unca.edu.

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NATIONAL

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PENNSYLVANIA

Pages & Places Book Festival

■ Saturday, October 2. All day, beginning at 9 AM. The Pages & Places Book Festival is a unique literary event that integrates the life and architecture of downtown Scranton into a book festival. It features panel discussions on issues of identity, including the ways in which recent advances in neuroscience challenge old ideas of what it means to be human; how societies respond to mass catastrophe; and how people, books and debates shape American life. Panelists include Christopher Hitchens, former president of the Rwandan Parliament Joseph Seberenzi, Icelandic novelist Bragi Olafsson and others. More info: pagesandplaces.org; P.O. Box 1323, Scranton, PA 18501.

The advertising deadline for Events is every Thursday. Rates: $210 for 50 words; $260 for 75 words, additional words (above 75) $2.00 each. To place an ad, call Amanda at (212) 209-5414.

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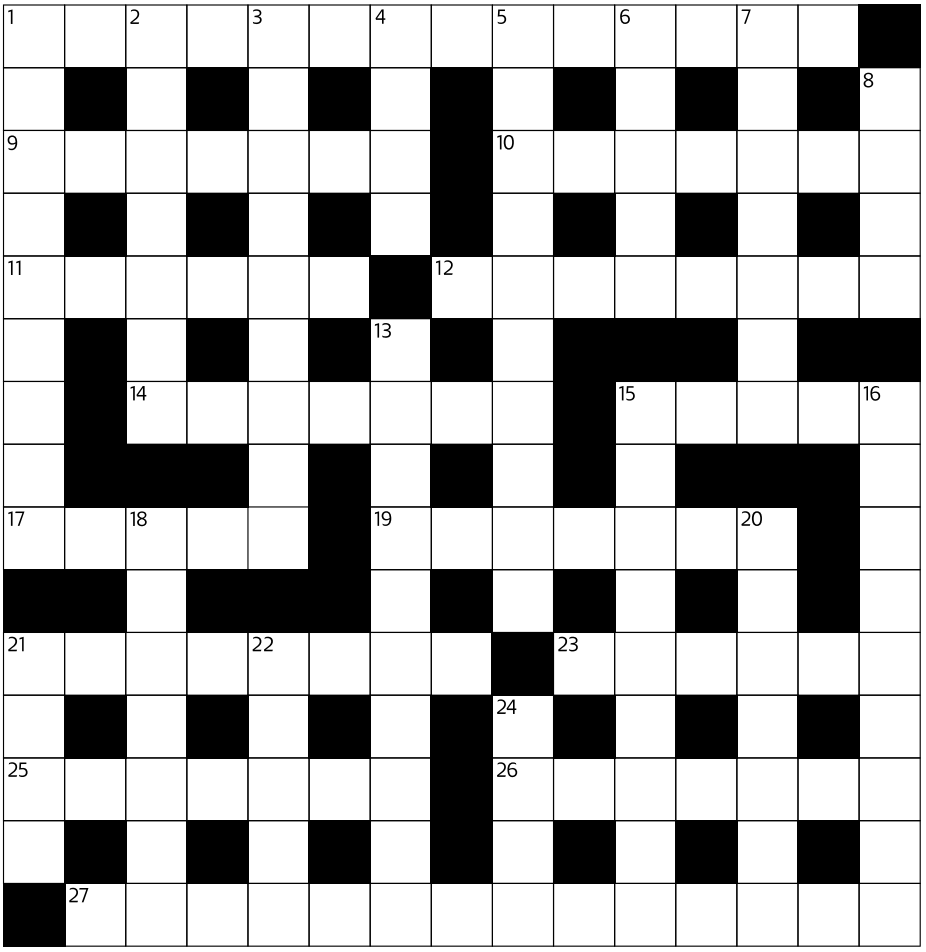
Puzzle No. 1601

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Golden platter backer, as seen by Abou? (9,5)

9 Laundress, but not the French take-off of it… (7)

10 …and your French friend can make it easy to get along with. (7)

11 Would the English consider them dirty digs? (6)

12 Highly compressed paper saver carried to extremes. (8)

14 Thus our exits are made quickly, if you do. (4,3)

15 Steer down here in good time for the winner. (5)

17 and **23** X □ represents two functions in New York. (5,6)

19 One in carpentry and bricklaying, for example, makes outbursts. (7)

21 Short rations may be good for the young. (4,4)

23 See 17 across

25 Sort of ripe a short month back, as some ears might be. (7)

26 No Pollyanna could make it saltier! (7)

27 Great tennis stars might win with such instant inspiration! (6,2,6)

DOWN

1 The actors aren't polished evidently, but this is rudimentary. (9)

2 Some body is a bounder in the way you'll swear! (7)

3 Takes another hitch. (9)

4 and **22** Disguised CIA post of this, by the very nature of the case. (4,5)

5 Old circus performers. (10)

6 The horse sounds so negative, we hear. (5)

7 Some pipes might be pushed out of the way. (7)

8 Drawn by eye, if you're a certain kind of expert. (4)

13 Walker comes across with it, possibly. (10)

15 Certainly not the right hip in Moscow! (3,6)

16 Poetaster—the sort that might be musical. (9)

18 Certainly not the most bitter time LSD brings out. (7)

20 Language literally belonging to the coast. (7)

21 Moves, possibly one foot up, with the grain. (4)

22 See 4

24 Count in German. (4)

This puzzle originally appeared in the October 4, 1975, issue.

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1600

T	A	B	L	E	C	L	O	T	H	■	T	H	U	S
H	■	L	■	X	■	A	■	E	■	C	■	E	■	U
E	R	O	D	I	N	G	■	R	H	U	B	A	R	B
C	■	W	■	T	■	O	■	E	■	N	■	R	■	M
O	U	T	S	■	P	O	I	N	S	E	T	T	I	A
S	■	H	■	B	■	N	■	C	■	I	■	E	■	R
T	I	E	P	I	N	S	■	E	F	F	E	N	D	I
O	■	■	■	L	■	■	■	■	■	O	■	■	■	N
F	A	M	E	A	N	D	■	F	O	R	T	U	N	E
L	■	A	■	T	■	E	■	U	■	M	■	N	■	C
I	N	N	K	E	E	P	E	R	S	■	I	T	C	H
V	■	D	■	R	■	L	■	N	■	M	■	W	■	A
I	R	O	N	A	G	E	■	A	G	O	N	I	E	S
N	■	W	■	L	■	T	■	C	■	O	■	S	■	E
G	A	N	G	■	C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	O	R

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The people at the store weren't much help. They couldn't understand why someone wouldn't want a phone the size of a postage stamp. And the rate plans! They were complicated, confusing, and expensive… and the contract lasted for two years! I'd almost given up when a friend told me about her new Jitterbug phone. Now, I have the convenience and safety of being able to stay in touch… with a phone I can actually use."

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Voice Dial	FREE	FREE	FREE
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